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Thesis

THE DRAMATIC ELEMENT IN LITURGICAL DEVELOPMENT FROM THE EARLY DAYS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH TO MODERN TIMES

Submitted by

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(A.B., College of the Pacific, 1928)

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THE DRAMATIC ELEMENT IN LITURGICAL DEVELOPMENT FROM THE EARLY DAYS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH TO MODERN TIMES

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

As natural as it is for a bird to sing, or a child of eight to go skipping, in an ecstasy of delight, across the green grass on the first spring day, so is it natural for mankind to find profound satisfaction in the dramatic expression of his deepest feelings.

Did you ever watch a group of small children at play? Invariably they are acting out the things they have seen and heard. They do it with an intensity that is almost unbelievable. More than once a little boy of four, supposing himself to be alone, has been heard to lift his voice in a most serious and convincing manner. Upon investigation he has been found standing on a chair, and with other furniture piled high in front of him. The chair upon which he stood, so it was explained, was the platform, while the other furniture represented the pulpit. In some way the little fellow had caught the serious note in the minister's voice, and was representing it accurately in his outflow of baby phrases. His whole being, when first seen, was vibrating with his determination to get his message across.

Have you noticed any groups of young people, entirely

relaxed, in familiar surroundings? As they relate their experiences to each other, first one and then another holds the attention of all, while spontaneously acting out some incident recently observed. The tone of voice, the movement of body, both portray exactly, the impression made by the thing that had happened. Why not cultivate this instinctive tendency? Why not use this God-given impulse to guide mankind to a wider knowledge of the Giver?

Even a very slight investigation of the subject brings to light two conflicting tendencies, on the part of church authority, toward drama. First, there is evidence of an insuppressable tendency toward the dramatic method on the part of the clergy itself. A study of their writings, even during the period of the Church's most scathing condemnation of the theater, proves this. At the same time there has been, for centuries, a certain amount of that attitude, just mentioned,-- condemnation. It arose, and justly so, with the introduction of the vulgar,- the misleading,- the sensuous element of acting. Like many other worthy causes, all drama has suffered, not because of its use, but because of its mis-use. Doubtless the Church is still justified in censoring the ignoble use of drama, but she is even more justified in cultivating this natural art for the carrying out of her own ends.

"Religion has this in common with art, that it discredits the actual practical world; but only because it creates a new world and insists on its actuality and objectivity. .....ritual is, we believe, a frequent and perhaps universal transition stage between actual life and that peculiar

contemplation of,or emotion towards life which we call art. .....Natures specially gifted can live lives that are emotionally vivid, even in the rare high air of art or science; but many, perhaps most of us, breathe more freely in the medium, literally, the midway space of some collective ritual.....ritual and art have, in emotion towards life, a common root, and further, that primitive art develops normally, at least in the case of drama, straight out of ritual."[1]

Jane Ellen Harrison, just quoted, thinks of ritual as a medium for carrying the heart, the spirit of mankind, into a new world of spirituality. With the acknowledgment of dramatic instinct as a natural art closely allied to the religious instinct itself comes the challenge, not only to use it, but to keep it pure for its greatest calling.

The purpose of this paper is to create an interest in the dramatic method of presenting religious truths, through the revelation of mankind's natural bent in that direction.

Scope

The great body of Christian liturgy in its many forms and usages affords an excellent field of investigation for this purpose. Examples will be cited from almost every type, showing that in all branches of the Christian Church including the primitive, the various forms of Catholicism,

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1. Harrison, Jane Ellen. Ancient Art and Ritual. PP. 168, 205,206,227.

the Episcopal Church of England and America, and other Protestant denominations, there is something of the dramatic element. The evolution of liturgy from its original to its present forms will be traced in so far as deemed necessary for the subject at hand.

No attempt will be made to indicate the technicalities of the rituals cited, but rather, details of the ceremonial will be described. The ritual refers to the words read or recited, while ceremonial is the manner in which the ritual is used. It may, therefore, include music, the use of ornaments and significant action. Ceremonial is the church's logical means of capitalizing that powerful dramatic instinct of mankind. Recent writers on this subject bemoan, however, the gross misuse of ceremonial. The claim that through the process of reformation and later of renaissance, the wise and intelligent usage has become scarce. Beauty and action alone, they say, are merely frivolous efforts to attract, and they attract only for a little while, unless attached to the ceremonials and having some real significance. Percy Dearmer, in his chapter on Music and Ceremonial says:

"Psychologically the essence of Public Worship consists in the ceremonial and not in ritual. Worship is not thought but is the orientation of the whole self towards God. There is,indeed, to the psychologist, no such thing as "mind"; but only attention, vital interest, desire, in the ever-changing flow of consciousness. Worship is feeling and action, and it must express itself in action. You can therefore have common worship without words, but not without significant

action; and this in its widest sense is what we mean by ceremonial."[1] Incidently, Dr. Dearmer believes the Anglican Church can do much toward bringing about a free natural worship by proclaiming the message of Christianity through "the only language that the whole world can read,-- a consistent, beautiful, and expressive ceremonial."[2]

As will be shown later, true drama has developed out of religious ritual and ceremonial, and more especially out of Eucharistic liturgy. If one chose to be entirely technical no mention would be made of the forms of religious drama thus developed, but this paper would include only the discussion of purely liturgical forms. However, since the liturgy has so easily developed into true drama and various forms of dramatic services, it is believed that by at least partially tracing the two latter, the close connection between the dramatic and religious tendencies will be more clearly seen.

The first main division following this introduction will deal exclusively with the formal liturgies, including many illustrations of the dramatic element found in the ceremonials of all periods. The four main divisions then following will have to do particularly with the persistence of the dramatic instinct and the development of true drama from the formal liturgy. The last main division preceding the summary will touch again upon the dramatic element in a few present day liturgies and will indicate the present tendency to use true

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1. Percy Dearmer, D.D. The Art of Public Worship p. 81.
2. Ibid. p. 116.

religious drama and dramatic ritualistic forms.

Definitions.

"Dramatic"

The term "dramatic" as applied to liturgy will be used in its widest sense, considering accurately conveyed emotion as the essential element. Most dramatists would add that this emotion must be conveyed through action, characterization and dialogue. In the formal liturgies of the Church, dialogue and characterization are practically missing,- action being used entirely to convey and arouse emotion. However, the litany spoken in connection with the acting does, in some measure, take the place of the dialogue. It may be said that the drama of these liturgies is rather designed to arouse than to convey emotion, though it is to be supposed, nevertheless, that the actors-- in this case, the priests and deacons-- themselves feel strong emotions which through their actions they try to convey to their congregations. There are two other forms which arouse the emotions. One is the practice of antiphonal singing, or at least the singing by one choir of words taking the place of dialogue and adding essentially to the conditions helpful in arousing emotion. A second is the participation from time to time by the members of the congregation. Here, through their own acts and words the emotion is kept alive within them, or we might say that certain feelings are even aroused. For instance, through the act of kneeling and bowing comes humility, while through the singing of praises, a dormant adoration of God is awakened, and through raising the arms, an intense desire for answered

prayer accompanies, more easily, the spoken or unspoken supplication. Thus in the formal liturgy of the Church we find many examples of the dramatic element.

From early times there has also been a type of religious drama making use of characterization and dialogue as well as of action. This is exemplified in the numerous plays and pageants given on special occasions, and often in lieu of sermons or other types of religious services. These can properly be called "drama", rather than being described as containing a "dramatic" element.

Liturgy.

Liturgy in the technical language of the Christian Church, is the order for the celebration and administration of the Eucharist. The English word "liturgy" is derived from, or at least corresponds to the Greek word λειτουργός, which in turn, comes from the Greek words λεῖτος meaning public and ἔργον, meaning work. According to its etymological use and earlier application, it meant a public service or function.[1] In Eastern Christendom, the Greek word is used exclusively to mean the celebration of the Eucharist.[2]

There are six main families or groups of liturgies, as follows:

1. The Syrian Rite(St.James). This includes the Clementine liturgy(probably erroneously named, because it was thought to have been compiled by the first century Bishop of Rome), the Greek liturgy of St. James, the Syriac liturgy of St. James and some sixty-four others of less importance.

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1. Allen, Rev. Alexander V.G., D.D. Christian Worship. Lecture on Primitive Christian Liturgies. p. 37.

2. Encyclopedia Britannica. Liturgy.

2. The Egyptian Rite (St. Mark). The Greek liturgies of St. Mark, St. Basil and St. Gregory and the Coptic liturgies of these same writers, are included in this group. It is known as the liturgy of the Apostles.

3. The Persian Rite. Originally the rite of the Nestorians, but almost completely assimilated to the Roman liturgy by Portuguese Jesuits at the synod of Diamiper, 1599.

4. The Byzantine Rite. In this group are included the Greek liturgies of St. Chrysostom, St. Basil and St. Gregory Dialogus. The Greek liturgy of St. Peter is also classified here but it is merely the Roman canon of the Mass inserted in Byzantine,framework. The ten different forms of Armenian Liturgy are also a part of this group.

5. The Hispano-Gallican Rite. A group of Latin liturgies which once prevailed widely in Western Europe but have since been superceded by the Liturgy of the Church of Rome.

6. The Roman Rite (St.Peter). The Mozarabic Liturgy (Spanish) until the eleventh century, the Gallican Liturgy (until the ninth- France), and the Ambrosian Liturgy as well as the Celtic, belong to this group. 1.

From time to time reference will be made to these various groups of liturgies, which are designated as the formal liturgies ofthe church.

The word "liturgy" however has undergone many changes. In its widest use it includes a public religious service of prayer, scripture and preaching, in Easter countries. In English speaking countries it has come to be used in a more popular sense to denote any or all of the various services of the Church, whether contained in separate volumes or bound in a Common Book of Prayer.

The term "liturgy" will here be used both in the narrower sense, first mentioned, and also with the latter denotation, as well as in its connection with drama proper which

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1. Encyclopedia Britannica. Liturgy. Six main families.

now often takes the place of the more formal services of any type.

The need for public as well as private worship is a logical cause for the use of certain ceremonial forms. Just as the court in its attendance on the sovereign is a body performing a corporate action round the throne, so the worshipping Church is a body performing acts of corporate worship round the throne of God; and it is this conception rather than the individualist view which underlies the major part of religious ceremonial. "Christian Churches have uniformly followed the precedent of the Jewish Temple in having a Holy Place and a Holy of Holies-- that is, in localising for the special purposes of worship, the presence of God, and, so far as ceremonial goes, in the directing it to that centre."[1] Wherever the significance of the dramatic symbolism of ceremony can be kept uppermost the liturgy retains a continual newness of value.

In summary, the purpose of this paper is to create an interest in the dramatic method of presenting religious truths, through the revelation of mankind's natural bent in that direction, as made evident by the element of drama found throughout the liturgy and services of the Christian Church.

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1. Frere, Walter Howard. The Principles of Religious Ceremonial. p. 202

DRAMATIC ELEMENTS FOUND THROUGHOUT HISTORY IN THE FORMAL LITURGIES OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

Description of parts of the various types of Christian Liturgies.

Primitive Christian Liturgies.

"And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them, partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee." Rom. 11:17-18.

These were the words of St. Paul to a group of gentiles. He had been exhorting them to realize that God had not rejected Judaism, and started an entirely new religion in Christianity. Rather, Judaism was the root and Christianity simply the grafting upon it of a new force and a new life. We must admit that Paul was right, when we realize that Christ himself went to the temple to worship. He did not reject it. He brought to it new life and new meaning. And if the Church of Christ grew out of Judaism, so did much of its ritual. For a considerable time after the establishment of the Church the early Christians went to the synagogue on Saturdays, the Jewish Sabbath, and on Sunday, the Lord's day they went to the Christian service of the Holy Communion or Liturgy. But as the time advanced that it became more and more a matter of life or death to attend a Christian service, the two services were combined. At first in the East, these two services were distinguished as the Pro-Anaphora and the Anaphora, the word Anaphora meaning "The Offering", corresponding to the Western Ante-Communion and Communion services. The first service, or as it was later often called,- the

first part of the Eucharist,- consisted of the Lections,- the reading of Old Testament scripture; the Chants,- the singing of Psalms; the Homilies or sermons; and of Prayers. This corresponded exactly to the old Jewish service of the Synagogue, and is also very similar to the present Ante-Communion. service. In the time of Jesus the synagogue service had been gradually developed by the Jewish Church, and had become a magnificent and beautiful ritual. It is not found that Jesus ever said a word of condemnation against the synagogue service. "In this worship the apostles continued until the Temple at Jerusalem was destroyed, and then it was lifted up to a higher plane of the Christian Church, and lived on in the Liturgies and Divine offices of the Catholic Church."[1]

"The Temple services pointed onward to the death of Christ upon the Cross. The sacrifice of the Eucharist is the perpetual memorial of that great act. As St. Paul says, 'As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come (ICor.11:26). The sacrifice of the Eucharist is identical with the sacrifice which our Lord offered upon the Cross, the same Priest and Victom, the same Body and Blood is in the Eucharist, and by the act of the separate consecration of the bread into the Body and the wine into the Blood, it mystically sets forth the death of our Lord upon the Cross. When the bell rings, at the moment of consecration, it is to remind you that at that moment the All-prevailing sacrifice which was offered upon the Cross is being mystically offered in the Church,

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1. Mortimer, Alfred G., D.D. The Development of Worship in in the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church. p. 28

and Christ is present upon His altar throne, the Lamb as it had been slain is present not only to be our food and sustenance, but to be our all-sufficient sacrifice."[1] The above quotation sets forth both the belief which leads to the solemn performance of certain ceremonies and the ceremonies themselves. The author does not indicate just how early such a service came to be used, but he gives this description immediately following, and in the same paragraph in which he relates the destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem and the continuance elsewhere of the same principle of sacrifice which it witnessed,- in the Christian sacrifice of the Eucharist.

From accounts in the Bible it seems clear that the very earliest Christian worship was not fixed and uniform but spontaneous. It was a feast more like the Last Supper, rather than an offering done by means of set forms. These very earliest ideas of the sacrificial offering conceived of it as accepted by God 'as from a friend'. The real,i.e. the spiritual gift is the thanksgiving of the heart and is offered at the heavenly altar to which prayers and oblations are directed. "But in time the idea lost its pure spirituality, as the notion arose that the material gifts themselves were received by God on His altar on high by the hands of His angels."[2] Then the Roman Canon of the second century brings the idea that the offering'may become to us the body and blood of our Lord'[3], which is another thought entirely. The thought here is that Christ's body is present on the

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1. Ibid. p. 18-19
2 and 3. Hasting's Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics. Worship.

Church's altar on earth and partaken of by the communicants. It was the principle of Irenaeus that God gives in this way in recompence for the Church's thanksgiving, a certain unique benefit in return. This is conceived in present day liturgy as communicated first to the consecrated elements themselves and through them to the communicants. So we see how the liturgy, beginning with the simple feast in commemoration of Christ grew into a pompous ritual of symbolic action.

We do not have to go farther, however, than the Apostolic Church itself to find a most dramatic display of emotion. It is not likely that there was any formula for the bringing of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4), and it is hard to know from the brief description given in the Bible, just what did happen there at the time of Pentecost. From the remarks made by on-lookers there must have been a very active participation by the whole congregation in the performance of most spectacular form of worship. One writer has the following to say about it:

"But if the Church took over <u>en bloc</u> all the religious service of the synagogue, it added thereto one or two new elements, which constituted that which was original in the Christian liturgy. I refer to the Supper, or sacred repast, and the spiritual exercises. These both occupied a very high place in the Christian service, such as we see it in the earliest documents. After the Eucharist, certain inspired persons began to preach and to make manifest before the assembly the presence of the spirit which animated them.

The prophets, the ecstatics, the speakers in tongues, the interpreters, the supernatural healers, absorbed at this time the attention of the faithful. There was, as it were, a Liturgy of the Holy Ghost after the Liturgy of Christ, a true liturgy with a Real Presence and communion. The inspiration could be felt-- it sent a thrill through the organs of certain privileged persons, but the whole assembly was moved, edified, and even more or less ravished by it and transported into the Divine sphere of the Paraclete. (ICor.XIV; and the Doctrine of the Apostles, 10, et seq.) These phenomena could not be regarded as a religious institution. Neither Christian communities nor pastors were able to produce them or obtain them at will. It was difficult to regulate them, as we see from St. Paul at Corinth. They soon disappeared, and from the beginning of the second century we find only exceptional and isolated instances of them. The only permanent element, on the whole, which Christianity added to the liturgy of the synagogue was thus the sacred meal instituted by Jesus Christ as a perpetual commemoration of Himself."[1]

As indicated above, it is hard to say just what could be behind such a display of emotion, but I feel that it was something very much akin to the dramatic instinct. It was a manifestation, perhaps not designed to convey, but at any rate, conveying to both participants and the faithful worshippers the overwhelming joy that came to them with the understanding and knowledge of Christ. We are told that

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1. Duschesne, Mgr.L. Christian Worship p. 50.

by the second century this enthusiasm of worship had almost disappeared. This was about the time of the writings of Justin Martyr. The author just quoted goes on to say that some of the most important rites of the Eucharist are described in the first Apology of Justin Martyr, and makes the following references which I give indirectly.

In Apology i.6 Justin Martyr tells of the Eucharistic celebration being preceded by an ordinary repast partaken of in common. It was called the Agape. This custom disappeared in less than one hundred years. The funeral Agape, of which there are indications as late as the fourth or fifth century was an entirely different institution. On the day of the Sun, memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets were read as long as time permitted. Then the president verbally instructed and exhorted an imitation of the good examples cited. Then all arose together and prayers were offered. Bread and wine and water were brought and the president offered prayers and thanksgivings to the best of his ability. The people assented by saying Amen. The distribution of the elements, which had been blessed, was made to each person present. In another passage of his Apology Justin, regarding baptism, adds description of the eucharistic liturgy in terms similar to those just cited, except that he here makes mention of the kiss of peace, which the Christians, he says, gave to one another after the prayers, and before the beginning of the sacred meal, or Eucharist.[1] Thus we see that by the second century some of the dramatic fervor of the first

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1. Ibid. p. 53

Eucharist had disappeared, and the use of regular forms had begun.

Gregory, in the latter part of the fourth century, not quite contemporaneous with Clementine liturgy, in his treatise of the Holy Spirit writes as follows:

Inasmuch, as men when approaching emperors and potentates for the objects which they wish in some way to obtain from those rulers, do not bring to them their mere petition only, but employ every possible means to induce them to feel pity and favor towards themselves, adopting a humble voice, and a kneeling position, clasping their knees, prostrating themselves on the ground, and putting forward to plead for their petition all sorts of pathetic pleas, so it is that those who recognize the true Potentate, by whom all things in existence are controlled, when they are supplicating for that which they have at heart, some lowly in spirit because of pitiable conditions in this world, some with their thoughts lifted up because of their eternal mysterious hopes, seeing that they know not how to ask and that their humanity is not capable of displaying any reverence that can reach to the grandeur of that glory they carry the ceremonial used in the case of men into the service of the Deity. And this is what worship is, that worship I mean which is offered for objects we have at heart along with supplication and humiliation."[1] Such, is an example of the very few scanty descriptions which we have of the early liturgies, and then it is not certain just how long they have been in use. How-

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1. Allen, Rev. Alexander V.G.,D.D., op. cit. p. 54-55

ever, enough is recorded to show that the dramatic element had its place, and it is interesting to note from the above quotation, was used with deliberation to invoke the favor of God.

As to the actual manuscripts, the copies of the liturgies themselves, there seem to be none dated earlier than the eighth or ninth century. The liturgy of Constantinople, called after Basil and Chrysostom, was not in existence at the time when they lived, nor was the Roman Mass. The sources for our knowledge of the worship of the fourth and fifth centuries are to be found in a so-called liturgy which is contained in the eighth book of Apostolic Constitutions.[1] This so-called liturgy, which is contained in the eighth book of Apostolic Constitutions and thought to have been completed about 340 or 341, has been commonly known as the Clementine, However, it was never used as a liturgy, but is merely a private compilation containing ritual directions which were adopted, and later served in many respects as a model and type of the later Eastern liturgy.[2]

The Apostolic Constitutions, we are told, represent a fusion of two similar works, the Didascalia of the Apostles, of which we possess only the Syriac version, and the Doctrine of the Apostles, discovered not long ago by the metropolitan Bryennios Philotheos. The former served as a base for Books I to VI of the Apostolic Constitutions. The Doctrine of the Apostles, much changed, became Book VII. Book VIII was probable added by the author of the later redaction of Didascalia

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1. Ibid. p. 34-36
2. Ibid. p. 36

and the Doctrine. This author lived and wrote about the end of the fourth century.[1] From the above citations, all from the same author it can be seen that the Apostolic Constitutions cannot be considered as normal and official liturgy of any distinct Church. There is an exact representation of the forms described in the Apostolic Constitutions in the great Churches of Syria, Antioch and others. The Syrian liturgies of the later centuries are indeed, also of the same type as the liturgy of the Constitutions.[2]

These explanations have been given to make clear the fact that some of the forms to be described as Syrian Liturgies may also be regarded as usages of a much earlier period since they coincide so closely with forms found in the Constitutions, which have a very early date.

Syrian Liturgies.

The services of the early Syrian Church can only be implied from descriptions found in the eighth book of the Apostolic Constitutions. There seems to have been a very precise arrangement of the congregation and all persons taking part in the service. As soon as the congregation had assembled, with the men on one side and the women on the other, and when the clergy had entered the apse, the readers at once began the lections, which were interrupted occasionally by chants. When reading, the reader ascended to the ambo, placed about the middle of the church between the clergy and the congregation, and read two lessons; then another took his

1. Duschesne, Mgr. L. Op. cit. p. 55
2. Ibid. p. 64.

place and chanted a psalm. The psalm was sung as a solo, with the congregation taking up the last modulations. This was called the Psalmus Responsorius (distinguished from the antiphon, which is a psalm rendered alternately by two choirs). At that time the respond alone was in use.[1] After a large number of lections, chants and homilies the various classes of persons not entitled to be present at the holy mysteries, the Eucharist itself, were dismissed. In that day so much significance was attached to the communion that only persons who had been properly trained and tested, and therefore become designated as "the faithful" were allowed to remain for the remainder of the service,- that part instituted by the Christian Church,- the communion,- the Eucharist,- that solemn moment when the body of Christ was again supposed to be broken and to bleed. Just before the dismissal of the catechumens, at the invitation of the deacons, they offered up silent prayer, the deacon formulating the particulars of it, giving the petitions in detail.[2] The faithful, especially the children, answered him by the supplication, Kyrie Eleison. The catechumens then stood up and were invited by the deacon to join him in the form which he employed, and later to incline their heads to receive the blessing of the bishop, after which they were dismissed. The same form was also observed for the energumens, the competents,- that is, those catechumens preparing to receive baptism,- and also for the penitents. This left the faithful alone in the church. These, "prostrating themselves towards the east,

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1. Ibid. p. 57
2. Ibid.p. 58

they listen to the deacon while he says the petitions of the Litany. The congregation join in these petitions by the supplication, Kyrie Eleison! The Litany is brought to an end by a special formulary: 'Save us, restore us again, O God, by Thy mercy.' Then the voice of the bishop makes itself heard above the silence, pronouncing in a grave and dignified manner a solemn prayer."[1]

What a dramatic time this period of dismissal must have been! It is hard for us to realize the significance that the service must have had for those who were dismissed, as well as for the faithful who remained. To become a communicant, then as now in the Roman Catholic and some Protestant Churches, meant to become a member of the Church. The whole meaning of Church membership signified a worthiness to witness again the suffering of Christ. How those who were not yet included among the faithful, must have longed for the time to come when they could remain to witness the mystery! Their hearts must have mellowed as they inclined their heads, and joined in the prayer of the deacon and received the blessing of the bishop. We, who are cold and who say we do not believe in forms, may have something to learn. The mere act of bowing brings humility; the exclusion from the category of the faithful again brings humility and with it aspiration to attain as they have attained. But if the first part of the service of the early Christian Church of Syria had its dramatic element, the second part had even more of it.

"The second part, the Christian Liturgy proper, begins

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1. Ibid. p. 59

with the salutation of the bishop, followed by a response from the congregation. Thereupon, at a signal given by the deacon, the clergy receive the kiss of peace from the bishop, while the faithful interchange it with each other, the men with the men, and the women with the women."[1] The same author goes on to tell us that "the deacons and other inferior ministers distribute themselves into two bodies, to one being assigned the supervision of the congregation, and the other the service of the altar. The former take their places among the faithful, arranging the latter according to their rank, the young children being placed at the approaches to the sacred precincts. They watch the doors also, in order that no profane person may enter the church. The others bring and place upon the altar the loaves and chalices prepared for the sacred repast, while two of their number keep waving the flabella to protect the holy oblation from insects. The bishop washes his hands and puts on a festal garment; the priests arrange themselves around him and together they all draw near to the altar. This is the solemn moment. After a private prayer offered in silence by the bishop, the latter makes the sign of the cross on his forehead, and then proceeds with the Eucharistic prayer, being interrupted once by the singing of the congregation with the choir of angels in their hymn, 'Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord.....'."[2] When the Eucharistic prayer has come to an end, the mystery is finished and Christ was in their midst abiding under the sacred veil covering the consecrated elements. So thought the faith-

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1.Ibid. p. 60
2.Ibid. p. 60

ful. Every act indicated adoration of Christ, or exemplified, as for instance, the kiss of peace, the spirit of Christ in the lives of those deacons and priests privileged to aid in the forms used in consecrating the bread and wine. The acts performed, the words spoken or sung, must all have brought a thrill of emotion to the performers and the watchers. Following the Eucharistic prayer, the Pater Noster, a short Litany was recited, including responses of Amen by the faithful, and another blessing by the bishop. Then, after the words of the bishop, (in a loud voice intended to arouse those who have been praying), "Holy things for holy persons!", the communion took place, perhaps the most dramatic of all acts performed in accordance with the Christian Liturgy. In the Church being described, as in certain churches today, the communicants believed that in partaking of the bread and the wine which had just been blessed, they were partaking of the actual body and blood of Christ. Regardless of personal belief regarding the act, it can at least truthfully be said that to those who do believe, the moment of receiving the elements is a most dramatic one. Christ gave his life upon the cross for me, and now by receiving this bread and wine, I actually receive the gift of Life and of Love from God! Imagine the thrill of emotion which must come with such a belief in the performance of the act!

By the sixth century many changes had been made in the ceremony connected with the Liturgy of the East, in some

cases, as in the Syrian, both omissions and additions. "The entry of the celebrants has become an imposing ceremony. The bread and wine are prepared before the entry of the celebrants, out of sight of the congregation. After the lections and the prayer of the faithful, the oblation was brought with great pomp to the altar. This procession of the oblation constituted the most imposing ceremonial of the entire Mass."[1] The ceremony of the dismissal of the catechumens was evidently not in use where the above ceremony was carried out, but the bread was prepared elsewhere. If the above description is accurate, there was a very decided element of drama.

A translation of a few fragments of the Liturgy of the Syrian Jacobites, including the anaphora of St. James will exemplify the type of ceremony just previously mentioned. The priest, after the celebrant has been prepared, enters the altar, giving part of the ritual and kissing the horn of the throne. He then proceeds to vest himself with the proper clothing for the ceremony which is to follow, first putting off his ordinary garment and putting on the Cuthino, a sleeved tunic, "And when he puts on the Cuthino he says 'Clothe me, O Lord, with the robe of incorruption and gird me with the strength of thy Holy Spirit, O our Lord'.....And when he puts on the Uroro,'Gird thee with thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty according to the worship and renown'.....And when he puts on the

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1. Ibid. p. 78

Phaino he signs it with three crosses, and says, 'Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness and thy saints with joyfulness, for thy servant David's sake turn not away the presence of thine anointed'.....And he takes the cover off the mysteries and he puts the paten on the left side and the chalice on the right and purificator and the spoon with the paten on the left side and the cloud on the right and he lights a taper and says 'In thy light shall we see light, O Jesus full of light, who art the true light that lighteneth every creature, enlighten us with thy glorious light, O effulgence of the heavenly Father!"[1] Thus we see the ceremony of the Christian Liturgy of the Syrian Rite becoming more and more pompous, providing thereby a more fitting background for the numerous dramatic elements of the service.

Omitting the Egyptian Rite, about which information seems to be scant, we now come to the Persian Rite, another of the six families of liturgy.

The Persian Rite

This, as stated before, was the Rite of the Nestorians originally, but later assimilated by the Roman Rite. "The Nestorian Liturgy may be considered to represent a type adopted in the countries beyond the Euphrates, where liturgical language was exclusively Syriac."[2] The churches of Persia were thought to have been founded by Missionaries from Antioch. The difference in language and in political allegiance gave

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1. Brightman, F.E. Liturgies Eastern and Western. p. 69-72
2. Duchesne, Mgr.L. op.cit. p. 68

a different feature to the churches and liturgy.

A peculiar form different from any which has been found in other liturgies, is the ceremony attending the making of the bread for the Eucharist. In the description found it was not made clear whether this form was performed in private or before a congregation. But it is interesting to note that even here the dramatic element enters. Psalms I to XXX are read in three subdivisions or hūlali, and before each subdivision is a prayer. "Meanwhile the priest brings fine flour and olive oil and warm water and mixes them together and pours leaven into them. He puts in salt, according to his discretion. He says the three hūlali, until the dough is made. When it is made he stamps it in the middle, on east and west, north and south and covers carefully until time of preparing the loaves.....The loaves themselves are later made with prayers and signings of the cross .....at the close he takes a little incense and pours it into the oven which he covers saying 'Halleluiah, halleluiah: glory be to thee, O Lord'."[1] This service continues as he takes the loaves out.

Other forms peculiar to the Persian Rite are found in the Mass of the Faithful. ".....As the priest draws near the altar, just as he draws near beseeching, he worships until he reaches the altar. And then he worships and rises and kisses the middle, and then he worships and rises and kisses the right horn, and then he worships and rises and kisses the left horn....."[2] and so forth, he continues with

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1. Brightman, F. E. op.cit. p. 75
2. Ibid. p. 76

long series of expressions of worship. The same author goes on as follows:- "When the carūzūtha is finished he rises and kisses the altar and repeats the gehāntha without stretching out his hands. Here he must not stretch out his hands because he has not received boldness. And at the other gehānthas, then let him stretch out his hands because he has now received boldness.....And his position shall be about a cubit distant from the altar and the space between his hands of like measure and he shall bow his head to his knees. At the end of the gehāntha he shall worship and kiss the middle of the altar." In a description of the Eulogia the same author says, "The people kiss the cross in the priest's hands and the eulogia, which was baked along with the buchri, is distributed by one of the priests....."[1] Other instances of the dramatic element might be noted, but they would be found to be similar to forms in the Greek and Syrian Rites, and also to the Roman, by which the Persian Rite was later absorbed.

Thy Byzantine Rite.

From a study of Cyril's "Catecheses" the general order of the Greek Liturgy as practiced in the early days in Jerusalem seems to be similar to that of other liturgies. However the ceremony seems to have been particularly pompous. As long a time as possible was given to the reading of the Scripture, followed by an earnest homily or period of instruction and exhortation by the President. The prayers, which were

1. Ibid. p. 78

mainly for intercession, were earnest and intense, marked with power and faith. Following this first prayer came the kiss of peace which was thought of as the seal of the prayer, or as Tertullian called it: "The sign of mutual forgiveness, peace and unity." The literal observance has now practically disappeared and survives only in symbolic forms. Then came the presentation of the elements, having been brought to the altar in a magnificent fashion. The eucharistic prayer was offered by the President according to his ability, and as in the case of this prayer in other liturgies, touched upon many subjects, but dwelt mainly upon that of thanksgiving that they were counted worthy to receive it. The prayer was interrupted from time to time by the "Amen" response of the congregation. Justin Martyr in his Apologies refers to the use of hymns in the Greek Liturgy, as well as solemn prayers, saying that these were characterized by dignity and splendor. It is evident that there was a good deal of freedom in the Byzantine Liturgy, and that the display of emotion and the dramatic forms were plentiful. "With gratitude to Him to offer thanks by pomps and hymns--.....stately and solemn prayers.....rhythmical forms of devotion."[1]

In the current rites of the Greek Christian Church the forms are very similar to those of the olden days, excepting that they have been expanded and elaborated, according to one author.

"Every part is greatly elaborated. Antiphonal singing,

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1. Hall, Charles Cuthbert. The Principles of Christian Worship. p. 85.

a large use of psalms and hymns has enriched the worship. Most of all the conception has been developed of a service which shall represent even to ear and eye, not only the action of the original institution, and the sacrificial import of the Eucharist, with all its elements of passion, triumph, heavenly sustenance, impartation and reception of eternal life, but including the preparatory services, the history of Redemption from the creation of light to the Incarnation, the Holy life of our Lord from the nativity to the public ministry, his teaching and works, the passion, death, burial, resurrection and ascension, the descent of the Spirit and the eternal reign,-- a symbolic, scenic, and even dramatic representation of all that the Church understands to be given to it in that life, and an appropriate utterance of its peace and joy, its gratitude and adoring praise, in view of such deliverance and triumph..... All that is splendid in vestments and processions, suggestive in ikons or images, impressive in variety of scenes and actions, of postures and participations, all that can be gained by musical responses, and flowing accompaniments to low, modulated prayers, or melodious settings of the highest expressions of a worship which embraces and emphasizes all the notes of a universal peace and fellowship and victory, combine to impress the meaning of the Incarnation and the glory of the Cross, and the Triune God from whom all blessings flow, and who is both now and through eternal ages to be adored."[1]

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1. Ibid. p. 195

Rev. Egbert C. Smyth, D.D. gives a quotation from an eminent scholar which will also give some idea of the dramatic effect of the Byzantine Liturgy:

".....And since all human teaching is but the purging of the ear to hear God's teaching, and since the whole man, and not certain faculties only, must enter into the divine presence, the sacraments must be the centre and crown of his teaching, for there the real heights and depths of heaven are most fully revealed and at the same time the commonest acts and things of earth are most closely and clearly connected with the highest heaven.....This is the vital truth which has given what we call sacramentarianism, its perpetuity. We may see in the Eastern liturgies something of the perversions and abuses of this truth. We may discern, also, its presence and power. This-- beyond else-- is the reason for their study, a study which penetrates to their secret, a use of them which appropriates their unwasted values, which brings the soul under the influence of their tranquil beauty, and into the peace which flows through them like a river of God, and to the fountains of strength and life."[1] Here the writer seems to indicate his belief that there is a real justification for adding to the simplest form of liturgy, anything which will make it more impressive, and therefore more appealing to the senses. He seems to feel that the changes which have been made in the Byzantine Rite (including the Greek Liturgies) have been desirable because of the added beauty to that most solemn of all rituals- the Eucharist.

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1. Smyth, Rev. Egbert C.,D. D. Christian Worship p. 78.

The Hispano-Gallican Rite.

There seems to be considerable doubt as to just how the Gallican Liturgy originated,- that is, whether it was originally a Roman Liturgy which became changed through uses in various countries, or whether it is an importation from the East through the Church at Milan. At any rate its usage prevailed at one time in Spain, France, Northern Italy, Great Brittain and Ireland. It later became assimilated with and superceded by the Church at Rome. The general opinion seems to be that its ceremony was much more elaborate than that of the original Church of Rome and wherever its influence has been strong enough the Church of Rome has become, in its liturgy, more pompous. There seems to be very little essential difference between the two rites.

In the Gallican Mass The Fraction was a very complicated matter with a certain amount of superstition connected with it. The particles of the Host were arranged upon the paten in the form of a human. The Council of Tours (567)[1] denounced this practice, and decreed that the portions should be arranged in the form of a cross. This remained as the Mozarabic custom.

"In Ireland the Host was divided in seven different manners according to the festivals; at ordinary Masses into five particles, on the festivals of saints and virgins into seven, on the festivals of martyrs into eight, on Sundays into nine.....and on the festivals of the Nativity, Easter, and Pentecost, into sixty-five. They were arranged in the form of a cross, with certain additional com-

1. Duschesne, Mgr. L. op. cit. p. 218

plications when they were numerous. At the communion each of the parts of the cross, or of its additions, was distributed to a special group of persons, that is, priests, monks, deacons....." [1] and so forth. "During this ceremony the choir chanted an antiphon.....In Gaul the faithful, in order to communicate, entered the sanctuary and came up to the altar. The same custom was not observed in Spain. There the priests and deacons communicated at the altar, the other clergy in the choir and the laity outside the choir. The men received the Host into the bare hand, the women into the hand covered with a linen cloth, called the dominical, which they brought with them for the purpose. During the communion a short chant was sung." So in the Gallican Mass as well as in the earlier rites we see that every act is a dramatic symbolism, full of meaning to those who watch or participate.

The rite which has lived the longest and developed the most smoothly from the earliest times, is the Roman.

The Roman Rite.

The Mass, which is always an elaborate affair in the Roman Church, is especially so when the Pope is the officiating Priest. Just before his entrance the book of the Gospels was solemnly brought and placed upon the altar. In the eighth century the pontiff and his deacon, dressed in their liturgical vestments, and preceded by the subdeacons, one of whom swung a censer, then entered the church from the sacristy along the sweet-smelling route to the altar. The

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1. Ibid. p. 218.

choir chanted a psalm completely in the early days, but later only continued until the pontiff had reached the altar. Before he reached the altar a deacon brought him a fragment of consecrated bread which was reserved from the previous Mass, and intended to be placed in the chalice before the ceremony of the fraction of the bread. Upon entering the sanctuary the Pope gave the kiss of peace to the senior bishop and senior priest, and then to all his deacons, and thereupon proceeded to prostrate himself before the holy table. After the Pope's prostration, the deacons proceeded two by two and kissed the altar, as well as the book of the Gospels. The above details regarding the entry of the officiating priest, which from earliest times has been associated with some pomp, were probably of a period no earlier than the fifth century.[1] The lections, chants and homilies occurred in just about the same manner as in the Syrian Rite described earlier, during the first part of the ritual. The prayer of the Faithful was omitted from the Roman Mass at an early date. The offering consisted of the bringing of the bread and wine which was to be used for the communion, for each person from the faithful to the Pope himself brought his own offering. The offering might be considered a time of preparation for the fraction of the bread and the communion.

After the time of Gregory the ceremony following was used at the celebration of the Eucharist.[2] Beginning with the kiss of peace, the Pope placed in the chalice the fragment of consecrated bread which had been previously brought

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1. Duchesne, Mgr.L. op. cit. p. 164
2. Ibid. p. 184

to him. Then turning to one of his two oblatae, and breaking it, he places one half upon the altar. Since all the loaves intended for the Communion were then removed, the half-loaf placed on the altar by the Pope was meant to maintain the idea of permanence. The Pope first partakes of the bread and wine. Then the bishops, priests, and so on until the congregation have communed. A precise form is followed so that each person receives elements which have, either directly or indirectly come into contact with the Holy table, so that each partakes of that which has been consecrated. "The communion having ended, the pope returns to the altar, and salutes the congregation, inviting them to join in an act of thanksgiving, the post communio. .....The procession is then reformed in the same order as it had at the entrance, and as it proceeds to the sacrarium the Pope gives his blessing successively to the different groups of the clergy and the faithful which he encounters on his way."[1]

In the Latin liturgical formularies and books three forms of prayer are found,- the litany prayers, the collective prayers and the Eucharistic prayers. In the second of these there is a very distinct element of drama. The officiating minister invited the faithful to pray, sometimes indicating the general tenor of the prayer, and sometimes repeating a short formula of invitation. The congregation stood with their arms raised up and hands extended and assumed silently the attitude of prayer. At other times, on

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1. Ibid. p. 187

certain days they were accustomed to kneel, or even prostrate themselves with their faces to the ground. "Then the voice of the officiating minister was heard, expressing in a short formulary a résumé, as it were, of the prayers arising from every heart, and the congregation associated themselves with him by the response, Amen."[1] These prayers, which were of an early date were subject to considerable regulation, which must have had the effect of uniting all the congregation in a very dramatic appeal, as for instance when all prostrate to the floor or raise their hands in supplication.

The description of the Roman Mass, regarding the entry, offering, fraction and communion as given above refer to the Stational Mass as celebrated by the Pope, and in which he had a very important part. This Mass is also celebrated in a similar manner, but with less pomp and ceremony in other churches.

During the Stational Masses the various ordinations took place in the Church of the Holy Apostles. The ordinations of the Priests and Deacons were the simplest. A notary announced the names, asking those who had anything against the candidates to say so without fear. The candidates were stationed at a certain place where they could well be seen. After prayers and formularies the whole congregation prostrated themselves, as did also the Pope, at the close of which he arose and placing his hands upon the head of each candidate recited a double form of prayer. At the close, the new deacons received the kiss of peace

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1. Ibid. p. 106

from the Pope, the bishops and priests, and took their places among them.

The ordination of the Pope is very similar to that of the priests and deacons, with a few added features of interest. Since it was a matter of obligation that the higher clergy be ordained in the sanctuary of the apostle himself, the ceremony, which took place on Sunday, was in St. Peters. The elected bishop entered wearing the papal garments, with the exception of the pallium. At the chanting of the Introit he proceeded to the altar and prostrated himself before it, as usual. But instead of rising immediately and going to his throne he remained there all during the singing of the Litany. He then lifted himself up while the bishops of Albano, Porto, and Ostia recited over him, one at a time, three prayers of which the last was the Eucharistic prayer. "During the saying of the latter by the Bishop of Ostia.....certain deacons held over the head of the Ordinand an open book of the Gospels. The benediction having come to an end the archdeacon placed the pallium upon the shoulders of the new pontiff, who going up to the throne at once began the Gloria in excelsis. The Mass proceeded with usual manner; and when it was over the Pope was conducted back to the Lateran with extraordinary pomp."[1] This ceremony, as so many others of special significance, was full of meaningful symbolisms, conveying the impression of bringing a particular fitness for office to the one being ordained.

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1. Ibid. p. 403

Another special ceremony of the Roman Catholic Church, previous to the sixth century, was that connected with the dedication of Churches in cases where there were relics to be buried. Before the saying of the Mass, there was a ritual called Denunciato cum religuiae ponendae sunt martyrum[1] used on such occasions. The bishop and his clergy having arrived at the place of sanctuaria, and the litany and chants having occurred, the bishop prayed. Then he placed the relics on a paten on which a linen cloth was spread, and covered the whole with a silk veil. The relics being carried either by the bishop or priest, the procession go toward the church to be dedicated, the choir chanting as they go, and the whole group pausing for the litany as they come nearer to the church. With two or three of the clergy the bishop goes into the church and mixes the mortar for the sealing of the altar-stone. "With a sponge previously dipped in the exorcised water he washes the altar once only.....The bishop now takes the relics.....The door of the church is opened and while he enters, followed on this occasion by all the people, a third litany is sung and concluded by another prayer. When this is finished and while the choir is chanting an antiphon, he divests himself of his planeta and proceeds alone to the altar, upon which he deposits the sanctaria ....Before closing the cavity he anoints the four internal angles of it. Then placing in position and sealing the stone of the tomb, he recites a prayer and anoints the stone once more at its centre and four corners. The altar is

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1. Ibid. 404.

covered, the bishop resuming his vestment, recites a final prayer. The linen and sacred vessels, together with the altar cross, are then brought to him to be blessed. He proceeds thereupon to the sacrarium where the doorkeeper awaits him, holding a lighted taper in his hand. The bishop blesses the taper and by it the lights of the church are immediately lit and the Mass begins."[1] What wonder that the church becomes a place set aside and sacred, a place were the soul may find rest and peace in the knowledge that other souls feel the need of a place fitting to worship God,- where communion with God is the natural and easy thing. We do not believe with the pagans that because we adorn, set aside and make beautiful a place to worship God, that God will therefore favour us, and give us special blessing, but we do believe that the beauty of a quiet church makes thoughts of God a little easier and plainer. God loves the beautiful. Therefore that which we have made beautiful,- have set aside for the worship of Him, reminds us of Him. The drama of the process by which this dedication takes place makes an impression which once and for all brings the church into the realm of the sacred things,- the things of God.

The Liturgy of the Protestant Churches.

Where anything at all of the dramatic element has remained in the ritual of the Protestant Churches it has remained substantially the same as the forms described in the Roman Catholic or other churches previously described. In most of the Protestant Churches, however, the liturgy has become an unimportant matter and the Eucharist is celebrated only a few

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Ibid. p. 405

times each year. It is possible that this is a better plan, since the constant use of the same forms, even though they are dramatic, tends to make us forget their meaning. However, a little more of the dramatic when the Eucharist is celebrated, should make it a more significant time.

The Church which held more closely to the Roman Mass, is the Episcopal Church of England. The reaction against the Catholic Church at the time of the Reformation was more a reaction against the superstition, immorality, and worldliness of the Church, than against its ceremony. At that time there was a definite setting aside of the notions specially marking the old religion (as medieval Catholicism was often called). These were, first, that consecration effected change in the elements themselves; and second, that the changed elements were offered as a propitiatory sacrifice for the living and dead by the action of the celebrant viewed as having a supernatural power as priest in virtue of the sacrament of 'orders'.[1] Thus the ritual of the Mass was generally felt by Protestants of all types to involve non-Scriptural and, therefore un-evangelic, ideas of the nature and means of Christian salvation. In other words the Protestants had discovered that the ideas just referred to did not begin with the apostles, but were evolved gradually by the Catholic system until they were nothing but forms without meaning. Protestantism, besides its emphasis on the Word rather than Sacrament, as a means of communion

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1. Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics. Christian Worship.

with God, and in keeping with its idea of salvation by faith and not deeds, regards worship, not as a meritorious action or service to God, but rather in the light of realized fellowship with God through Christ as children with a father. For a while an attempt was made to hold in part to some of the old forms which had become dear to many. Finally the Holy Communion of the Lord's Table replaced the Mass and its distinctive worship.

The Reformation in England culminated in the English Prayer Book, put into use on Whitsunday in the year 1549, during the reign of Edward VI. A few lines from that first English Prayer Book will indicate, not only the similarity to the Roman Rite in spite of many changes, but what is essential to this paper,- the presence of the dramatic element. "Upon the day, and at the time appointed for the ministration of the Holy Communion, the Priest that shall execute the (holy) ministry, shall put upon him the vesture appointed for that ministration that is to say: a white Albe plain, with a vestment or Cope. And where there be many Priests or Deacons, there also many shall be ready to help the Priest, in the ministration, as shall be requisite; and shall have upon them likewise the vestures appointed for their ministry, that is to say, Albes with Tunicles."[1] In theory, the liturgy and ceremonial of the Church of England is essentially like that of the Catholic Church. The fact is, however, that the ceremony is not carried out according to authority, in all the churches, but is chosen according to indi-

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1. Mortimer, Alfred G., D.D., op.cit. p. 58

vidual tastes. This condition must have come about due to the final banishment in the Elizabethan settlement of forms savouring of Roman Catholic doctrine. Forms not having anything to do with the objectionable doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church were retained in some places and abandoned in others. In the Church of England, therefore, as in other Protestant Churches the ceremony is insignificant in many instances. "The difference between Protestant and Catholic ceremonial is that the Catholic ceremonial means something and the Protestant means nothing.....It is chosen by individual taste because it is thought to be pretty or appropriate. Every part of Catholic worship, on the other hand, is symbolical, just as the worship which God ordained through Moses was symbolical. The very church in which we worship is symbolical in its architecture. It is divided into nave and chancel. The word nave is taken from the Latin word for a ship, and symbolized the Church on earth, which is like a ship tossing on the waves of this troublesome world, in danger from its storms. At its entrance is the font to teach people that it is by Baptism that they enter the Church Militant. It also contains a pulpit, a lectern, and a litany desk, because in the Church Militant instruction is needed, which is given from the pulpit and the lectern, and supplications are offered from the litany desk.

"The chancel represents the Church in heaven. Between it and the nave there is a screen, which typifies death, through which you must pass in order to enter heaven. This screen is not a dark and gloomy barrier, but open so that you

can see through it, to remind you that our Lord has overcome the sharpness of death and opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. In the chancel the most prominent thing is the altar.....the altar is the throne where we offer the Eucharistic sacrifice, the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.....Upon the altar is the Cross to remind us of the sacrifice of Calvary."[1]

It might be objected that symbolism is not drama. No, in itself it is not, but it forms in this case, a necessary background for giving meaning to the simple acts and words of the priests. The symbolism found in the use of vestments is particularly interesting on this account. The same author just quoted tells us about this also, showing that every part of the vestment tells something of the Passion of Christ. First there is a black cassock reaching to the ground, buttoned all the way down, indicating the separation of the priest from the world. The helmet of salvation of which St. Paul speaks is symbolized by a square piece of linen with a collar, put on over the head and around the neck. It also symbolizes the cloth with which Christ was blindfolded during his Passion. A sort of tunic called the alb, worn by all in the time of Jesus, typifies purity. The girdle bespeaks the cords with which the Lord was bound before His crucifixion. The rope with which He was dragged to the place of His death is manifested by the stole which the priest wears. The maniple, stands for obedience and the cords which bound His hands. The unity of the Church is symbolized by the chasuble repre-

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1. Ibid. pp. 63-65

senting the seamless robe of Christ.

Everything that is done during the service also has its meaning. For instance, the genuflection of the knee, that is, the kneeling on one knee while going to the altar or returning to the seat when the Blessed Sacrament is upon the altar implies "an act of adoration to our Blessed Lord Himself. The bowing is not an act of adoration, but merely of respect, just as we bow to one another when we meet in the street."[1] Other explanations of the meaning of the various acts will be given under another section, because of their elaborate symbolism. The above descriptions have been given, perhaps rather inconsistently, under the sub-title of this section, for they are not meant to indicate that they are used in the Church of England, but rather to set forth the beauty of a liturgy having symbolic meaning, in contrast with haphazard ceremonials which are insignificant.

The recoil which took place at the time of the Reformation has now spent itself, and today many are feeling after the proper redressing of the balance of worship long disturbed by historical causes, and are seeking a synthesis of the Protestant, or Evangelical emphasis on the one hand, and the Catholic or Sacramental on the other.

It seems to be the opinion of Dr. Mortimer, a rector of St. Mark's Church in Philadelphia, that since the Church of England is one of the three parts of the Holy Catholic Church, therefore it should follow the authorized ceremony of that church,[2] rather than to disguise in clothes which do

1. Ibid. p. 70
2. Ibid. p. 62

not symbolize. We would gather also that he believes there is a continuity of authority beginning at the very earliest period of the Church which should be followed rather than some disordered forms which have no meaning. Wherever the Liturgy of the Church of England is accurately followed, we have a dramatic element just as surely as in the Roman Catholic Liturgy. In the liturgy of other Protestant Churches, however, the dramatic symbolism has practically died out, with the disappearance of the authorized forms. There is another type of ritual which has had some usage recently and which, although it is not symbolical, nevertheless is highly dramatic in its effect upon those who take part in it. It makes use of what Dr. Mortimer called the "pretty and appropriate" forms. These, I think, are worthy of usage in the church, because they bring about a tranquility which in some way turns one's thoughts to Christ. These services could not, however, be included as the formal liturgy of any church. More will be mentioned of this type of service under a later section.

Miscellaneous

In the liturgy of the Christian Church there are certain portions which have loaned themselves particularly to dramatic development.

The Lenten Veil.

A strange evolution has taken place regarding the attitude toward the Host at the time of consecration. Primitive

altars were supplied with numerous veils for the purpose of disclosing from the view, the priest and his actions when the elements were blessed. But by Medieval times the veil had been greatly shortened with the idea of display in this part of the ceremony. In England there has been very little use of the veil since the nineteenth century, but in Italy and Scicily it can still be found in many places.[1] It is drawn up at the moment of consecration so that the people may see the Host and the Chalice. The sight of these became the essential part of the service. In either case the procedure is dramatic, for there is a particular emotion conveyed. The veiling must have had the effect of bringing awe and reverence toward some Power unseen,-- Who could see but not be seen,-- a nearness of the presence of God, and yet an impossibility to see the mystery. On the other hand the the lifting of the veil would bring a climactic moment,-- a sort of thrill,-- a satisfaction, and a realism to the whole ceremony. Each form was intended to carry over a particular idea, and I think each succeeded in carrying out its intention.

Regarding the preparation of the altar for the Eucharist, there is an interesting account in the Liturgy of the Coptic Jacobites. After the litany was recited, the priest washed his hands and prayed, then rubbed the lamb above and below and prayed again, The oblation was then offered at the close of which while the choir sang the "priest shall wrap the lamb in a silk veil and raise it on its head and in like manner the ministering deacon shall wrap the cruet of wine

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1. Legg, J. Wickham. Essays Liturgical and Historical.

in a silk veil and raise it on its head also. And before each of them a deacon shall carry a lighted torch and they shall go round about the altar once while the priest says praises."[1] When the circuit was complete the priest faced east and the deacon west and they signed with three crosses. Later the priest covered the paten and chalice each with a veil and the whole with the prospharin. It is not known what significance these various acts have. It is a question whether the veils used had any connection with the lenten veils of a later day. The liturgy is of the Egyptian rite and therefore very early.

There is a good deal to be said regarding the sign of the cross, however.

The Sign of the Cross.

The extension of the arms in the form of a cross, while a form which could easily become insignificant is really one of the most meaningful and dramatic elements in the liturgy, for its real reference is to the position of Christ's arms as he hung on the cross.

Evidences of the use of this method of giving the sign of the cross has been found in many liturgies and countries, and date to very ancient times. Missals mentioning it are found dating as late as the sixteenth century in France and to the time of Edward VIII of England. In a Book of Ceremonies published at the close of his reign the following words occur:- "After the which (i.e. the elevation) the Priest ex-

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1. Brightman, F. E., op. cit. p. 70

tendeth and stretcheth abroad his armes in form of a cross; declaring thereby, that according to Christ's commandment, both he and the people not only have the fresh remembrance of his passion, but also of his resurrection and glorious ascension."[1]

There are other interesting ways of making the sign of the cross, and their symbolism makes them highly significant as also do the places where used. The number of uses has grown with the years, into such large proportion, that one author writes:- "Such a number of crossings as the Roman Missal enjoins, renders the service theatrical. There can be no doubt that the original meaning of this sign was benedictory. It is natural that the Church, accustomed to bless everything with the sign of the Cross, should so bless the unconsecrated bread and wine, but it is surprising at first sight that the sign of the Cross should be frequently made over the body and blood of Christ."[1]

Grancolas, in attempting an explanation, gives the following account: "The priest makes the sign of the cross with the host over the chalice, outside the chalice and at the foot since anciently they were made with the host over the new fruits or other things that they had blessed in saying per quem haec omnia, so that they might receive their benediction not from the prayers of the priest alone, but from Jesus Christ Himself, who was present, and also is the source of all benediction. Afterwards when these fruits ceased to be offered during Mass, the benedictions or signs of the cross remained,

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1. Beresford-Cook, Rev. Ernest. The Sign of the Cross in Western Liturgies. p. 5
2. Ibid. p. 12

and are made at Per quem haec omnia, over the host and over the chalice, and at Per ipsum, over the chalice and over the hosts that are on the altar (qui sont autour), with the principal host-- viz., that which is intended for the communion of the priest. The five signs of the cross arise from a custom of making the sign when any Person of the Trinity is mentioned, and therefore as the Son of God is named three times, the Father once, and the Holy Spirit once, we have the reason why there are five crosses at this place."[1]

Innocent III, in De Sacro Altaris Mysterio insists on the sign being made with three fingers, and gives his reasons:- "The sign of the cross is to be made with three fingers, because it is imprinted under the invocation of the Trinity, of which the prophet says, Who hath comprehended the dust of the earth in three fingers so that it descends from the right hand to the left, because Christ came down from heaven to earth, and crossed over from the Jews to the Gentiles. Some, however, make the sign of the cross from the left to right because we ought to go from misery to glory, like as Christ also passed from death unto life, and from the place of darkness to paradise, especially so that they sign both themselves and others in one and the selfsame manner."[2]

A peculiar usage in the Mozaribic rite is explained as follows:- "At the 'fraction' the host is broken into nine parts, the celebrant arranging seven of them in the form of a cross, and the two others at the right side. During this ritual moment the choir sing the Nicene Creed. The seven

1. Ibid. p. 19-20
2. Ibid. p. 20

portions of the host which form the cross, are intended to represent the Incarnation, Nativity, Circumcision, Epiphany, Passion, Death, and Resurrection of our Saviour; the two particles placed at the side import the Glory and the Kingdom, thus forming no part of the cross, since they refer to that which is subsequent to it."[1]

It is seen that there is much difference of opinion as to the method of crossing and the reasons for it. A recent rector gives many reasons for using the sign. By using it when tempted he is reminded for Christ who overcame temptation by the power of the cross. Since prayer gains its power through the One who was crucified, he therefore makes the sign before prayer. When pardoned he remembers that his pardon was sealed on the cross. These and numerous other reasons does he give. To those who make the sign a matter of personal significance what a great effect it must have, reminding each time as it does, of the Saviour,-- suffering with Him, yet penitent before Him!

The sign of the cross is used in some ceremonies for the blessing of the incense. It may be recalled that from the very earliest times incense has been used as an offering to God. Refer to such passages prophesying the coming of the Messiah as:- "And in every place incense shall be offered unto my Name, and a pure offereing," (Malachi) and "Let my prayer be set forth in thy sight as the incense; and let the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice." (Psalms). It is thought by some that this typifies "prayer and sacri-

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1. Ibid. Note I.

fice going up to heaven as the wreaths of incense ascend. In the Christian Church, in addition to this, it typifies the merits of Christ which have to be added to the prayers of the saints and of the Church to make them of value before God."[1]

A quotation from St. Thomas shows a belief that the sign of the cross should not be used for incense. "We do not use incense because of a ceremonial command of the Jewish law but by reason of an ecclesiastical statute; therefore we do not use it in the same manner as was ordered under the old law. Two objects for which it is employed: Ist, out of reverence for this sacrament (of the altar), in order that any disagreeable smell, (from the number of people gathered together) in the place that could cause any feelings of disgust, might be dispelled by its sweet odour. 2nd, in order to symbolize the effective grace with which Christ was full."[2]

The objection to the signing of the cross, or in other words, the blessing of the incense lies in the misunderstanding of its usage,-- St. Tomas evidently believing that it was not used as an offering but merely as a preparation. Regardless of the dispute, the facts remain that incense <u>is</u> burned at the time of the Eucharist, and that the signing of the cross is made. In both cases the acts are performed with the idea of symbolizing an adoration and reverence for God and a desire to please Him.

It is to be gathered from the various authors, however, that the censing of the altar was not originally a Roman Rite

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1. Mortimer, A. G. op.cit. p. 70
2. Beresfore-Cook, Rev. Ernest op.cit. p. 23

but that the usage was adapted from some other liturgy at a comparatively late date. In the Liturgy of the Syrian Jacobites there is an account of censing in the Mass of the Catechumens. "The priest takes the incense and worshipping censes to the midst of the table of life three times, which is a type of the Father.....and the north horn he censes three times, which is a type of the Son.....and the south horn he censes three times, which is a symbol of the Holy Ghost.....And he ascends the steps and raises the incense over the mysteries on the east side....."[1] The fact that this was a usage in the Mass of the Catechumens would indicate a very early date. Thus, again there is evidence of the dramatic element in Christian Liturgy from the very first.

Use of Candles.

The use of candles at funerals must have been the custom as far back as the eighteenth century for in the Annual Register, 1769, January 14 we read a Chronicle:- "Mrs. Mead, mother-in-law of Jack Wilkes, was attended to her grave by 116 men carrying lights." There is also an account of Queen Anne's funeral. "At the entrance within the Church (Westminster Abbey) the Dean and Prebendaries in their Copes, attended by the choir all having wax tapers in their hands, are to receive the Royal Body with an anthem and are to fall into the procession just before the Norroy King of Arms and so are to proceed, singing, into King Henry the seventh's chapel....."[2]

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1. Legg, J. Wickham. Essays Liturgical and Historical.
2. Ibid.

These were Church of England Services. In the Roman Catholic Church there is also this custom. Just what the symbolism is regarding the use of candles at funerals I do not know, but their use of candles at the Eucharist has long prevailed, and seems to have a special meaning. The very arrangement of the altar therefore becomes significant. "Indeed, the altar brings before us the Atonement and the Incarnation-- God made Man and dying for us upon the Cross. Before the altar seven lamps are burning, for we read in the fourth chapter of the Book of Revelation (IV:5) of the seven lamps which are 'the seven Spirits of God'. At the back of the altar are candlesticks, six in number. We are told of seven in the Revelation, but on the altar the Cross takes the place of the middle candlestick in accordance with the old motto: 'The Cross is my Light.' "[1]

Missa Sicca.

The Missa Sicca is a service connected with the Eucharist, or it might be more nearly proper to say, used instead of the Eucharist. In it there is neither consecration nor communion. Its use has been particularly in England, although by a different name, it has probably been used also in other places. The object of the form is to supply a liturgy for the sick room, on ship-board or other places where the full equipment is impossible. Such a mass on ship-board is described as follows: "In the place on board called Ecclesiola, a table is prepared and a clean cloth, not blessed, is put

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1. Mortimer, Alfred G. op.cit. p. 65.

upon it, and in the middle of the back part of the table are set a cross and two candlesticks, one on each side, with lighted candles in them. When the priest is about to say a mass of this kind, he comes before the table and puts on a surplice, and a stole hanging from his shoulders, which he arranges in the form of a cross before his chest, and keeps it in place with a girdle."[1] Then follow certain portions of the ritual, omitting the celebration of the Eucharist, and closes with the kiss of peace. Here we see only a form carried over to what has been termed "sham ceremony" in which the drama alone is the essential thing, for the actual mass does not take place. The elements are not consecrated and there is no communion. Since these are the essential points in the Christian Liturgy for those who believe, we could almost say with a Medieval writer that "It is a thing without any good." The only worth is the addition of beauty to a service of worship. The object of it seems to have been to make the worshippers "feel" as though they were attending a Eucharist service, and in this way the whole service became a drama.

Color Symbolisms.

Color in itself is capable of arousing very definite emotions and dramatists are coming more and more to consider color effects in the production o f plays and pageants. If color alone is thus capable, its possibilities, when used also in careful symbolism can readily be seen. For centuries

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1. Legg, J. Wickham Three Chapters on Recent Liturgical Research. p. 29

the Church in connection with the liturgy has prescribed a certain definite use of colors for vestments. They differ according to the seasons of the Church's year.

"White, the emblem of purity is used on the feasts of our Blessed Lord, of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of Virgin Saints. Red, typifying blood and also fire, is used on the feasts of Martyrs who shed their blood for Christ, and on the feast of the Holy Ghost; for fire is the symbol of the Holy Ghost, and at Pentecost the tongues of fire came and sat upon the heads of the apostles (Acts II:3). Violet, the colour of penitence, is used in Advent and Lent, and on penitential occasions. Green, the colour with which God has clothed the earth, tells of hope, and is used at seasons when there are no festivals or feasts. And lastly, black, the emblem of sin and death, is used only on Good Friday, the day of our Lord's death, and at Funerals and Requiems."[1] So even in the clothing warn by the priest we find much of the dramatic element.

However, there is a great deal of divergence in the use of colors in the ceremonies of the different churches of the present day and of the various periods of history. It is quite evident that there has always been more or less of a struggle to keep the usages of colors uniform throughout all churches having formal rituals. The above quotation was merely a general statement by the author, and it does not indicate what period or particular church or rite followed the above form. We find instances, as in the case of John Grandison, the reforming Bishop of Exeter, drawing up in

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1. Mortimer, Alfred G. op. cit. p. 67

the fourteenth century an Ordinale for use in his cathedral,[1] of individual ideas being brought into use.

One author tells of the semi-quasi-natural symbolical meanings such as black for sadness, white for purity, and so forth. He also quotes Spenser as follows:

> "Lo! two most goodly virgins came in place
> Ylinked arm in arm in lovely wise
> Of which the eldest, that Fidelia light
> .....
> Was arrayed in lily white
> .....
> Her younger sister that Speranza light
> Was clad in blue, that beseemed her well,
> While Clarissa, "full of great love"
> And "chaste in work and will",
> Was all in yellow robes arrayed, still."[2]

A recent author has attempted to bring something definite out of the maze of ideas, so that the colors used for the liturgy will be uniform. He suggests as an ideal sequence the use of violet for the Advent, the Rogation, and from Septuagesima to Lent; white from Christmas to Epiphany, for the first four weeks of Lent, for Easter, the Ascension, Trinity, Dedication, Blessed Virgin Mary, St. John, and the Virgins, as well as for Baptism, Confirmation, Marraige and Ordination; green after Epiphany; red for the Passion, Whitsuntide, the Apostles, martyrs, evangelists and Holy Innocents; yellow for Confession, and St. Mary Magdalene; and black for Passion, Funerals and Commemorations; while gold may be used as a substitute for any color.[3] He has in mind particularly the Episcopal Church.

While the use of colors, from the standpoint of beauty

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1. Percy Dearmer,D.D. The Parson's Handbook. p. 44
2. Various Authors. Essays on Ceremonial. p. 172.
3. Percy Dearmer,D. D. op.cit. p. 130.

alone, adds to the interest and effect of the service, it is clearly seen that when these colors have some definite meaning, their use becomes also an added element of drama.

Ceremonies of Christian Initiation.

We have seen that the elaborate Pre-Communion or Pro-Anaphora service is in essential borrowed from the Jews, and that it is the Communion or Anaphora which was introduced by Christianity. In the early days there were four classes of Christian worshippers, the first being those who were studying to become communicants. They were called catechumens. There were so many of these by the end of the second century that it was necessary to systematize the rites to deal with them. One of the most interesting was the rite of Effeta[1] which was one of the forms of purification for baptism. The priest moistened his finger with saliva and touched the upper part of the lips and ears of each candidate. This mode of anointing, after the manner of the deaf-mute, in the Gospel was accompanied by regular formula. Then when the candidates had laid aside their garments, they were anointed on the breast and back with exorcised oil, all of which was symbolical. The critical moment of strife with Satan had arrived. The candidates were then to renounce him solemnly in order to bind themselves to Jesus Christ. Their senses were loosed that they might be able to hear and speak. They were anointed with oil as athletes about to enter the arena. The ceremony being over, the candidates then prostrated themselves in prayer and were

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1. Duschesne, Mgr. L. op. cit. p. 297

dismissed by the archdeacon.

While the candidates were preparing for baptism the Church was preparing to initiate, to receive them. On Thursday in Holy Week the chrismal Mass was celebrated, at which the holy oils were consecrated for use in the ceremony of initiation.[1] The oils were prepared in two separate vessels, one pure oil, the other with fragrant balsam. The Pope himself poured balsam into the oil in the sacristy before the Mass. During the ceremony, the two vessels were held by clergy of minor orders standing before the altar. The Mass was celebrated with high ceremonial because ofthe solemnity of the day. Toward the end of the Canon of the faithful they brought small vessels of oil to be blessed for their own use. This was oil for anointing sick,and the faithful could make use of it themselves. The vessels were placed on the balustrade, which separated the sacred precincts from the rest of the building. The priests and deacons took them to the altar where the Pope blessed them. The deacons then returned them to the balustrade.

The ceremony of the baptism itself was even more elaborate and symbolic than the preparation for it had been. The baptistry at the Lateran was a very beautiful affair with a candelabram, a golden bowl of balsam, and streams of water flowing from beneath the heads of stags and a golden lamb. It was there that the Pope officiated at the "Easter Baptism."[2] This was the most imposing of all the pontifical ceremonies.

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1. Ibid. P. 305

2. Ibid. P. 309

He entered at the head of a procession before which two great tapers were borne, the litany meanwhile being sung. In the eighth century there were three breaks in this long prayer, by the sign of the cross over and in the water and again at the insufflation, or breathing over it, and at another place when the two dignitaries who carried the tapers plunged them into the font. The Canon being ended, the Pope took an ampulla full of chrism and poured it crosswise on the water, which he then stirred with his hand.

Then, one by one, in solemn procession and making solemn responses the "elect" were baptized by the Pope with the help of the priests and deacons. Before entering the chapel they went before a priest who anointed them on the head with the fragrant oil of holy chrism. Then resuming their white clothing they were taken before the Pope, who pronounced the invocation of the Holy Spirit. The Pope then made the sign of the cross with his thumb previously dipped in the chrism, upon the forehead of each neophyte saying to each separately, 'In nomine Patris et Fibii et Spiritus sancti. Pax tibi'.[1]

To the present day the preparation for baptism and communion are attended with much solemnity and symbolism, though greatly modified from the service just described where the Pope himself officiated. It is hard to imagine what the effect of such a ceremony must have been upon the neophytes who after studying for many months were at last ready for baptism, which was to wash away their sins and initiate them into Communion, where they might partake at last of the Eucharist. Perhaps a more rigid testing for Church members today

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1. Ibid. p. 314

would make church membership a thing more to be desired, just as it happened in the early days; and it is not unlikely that a carefully planned service of symbolism would make a deep and lasting impression.

Enough examples have been cited to show that there has been, throughout Christian Liturgy, from its very beginning a distinct dramatic element. Practically nothing has been said of present day liturgies. All one needs to do is to visit any Roman Catholic Church today to see how the old forms have continued. The two parts of the service, Pre-Communion and Communion are still quite distinct, but the homily is greatly shortened. In place of the reading of a very large number of psalms, and the singing of many chants, a few only are recited. The whole service at a Sunday morning Mass often takes less than one hour. Recently at a Mass especially for the children, but which many adults attended, the service was made solemn and beautiful by the many kneelings, genuflections, prayers and the singing of songs by children's choir. The building was large, holding at least five hundred persons,- probably more. When the children's voices began to float out over the room it really reminded one of the stories of angelic hosts. All the songs were tender, bringing thoughts of the love of Jesus toward His children, and urgings that we should love Him too. Then when the bell rang and the priest had said the Eucharistic prayer, he crossed himself before the Host. The children's voices again told to us the story of Christ's passion, "He is bleeding He is bleeding", and later "He is suffering,

He is suffering." Their words came clearly to us through the quiet Church, and to those of us who were unaccustomed to the service, a feeling of deep humility, of love, and of desire to serve, was the result. When the Host had been consecrated and the people went forward for Communion, there came a strong sensation of receiving again Christ's gift of Life and Love, in spite of the fact that we ourselves, not being members of the Church, did not commune, and moreover did not even believe that the Elements being distributed were the actual body and blood of Christ. The emotion which shook us was caused purely from the drama and solemnity of the occasion which brought up vivdly before us a picture of Christ's suffering with all its significance. The candles, the censing, the quietness and calmness of the whole service brought feelings of peace and devotion, along with a new strength and desire to serve.

The Mass attended was one of the very simplest now used in the Roman Catholic Church, and yet it had a dramatic effect. In most Protestant Churches, the use of definite forms and acts have been reduced to the minimum in the liturgy and the Eucharist is only observed on stated occasions, or a certain number of times a year. But these churches other types of services have retained not only an element of drama, but have ushered in the true drama as a means of teaching religious truths. Much more will be said regarding such usages in a later division.

THE DARK AGES

The Decay of Drama Brings the Condemnation of the Church

In order to show how the Church became the foster mother of Medieval drama, thus eventually bringing what we have called 'true drama' to the church service, it is necessary to relate a few facts about the origin of early drama. While the dramatic element in the formal liturgy continued, the true drama, born of the Greek religion rose to great heights, spread its influence over all the world, and died under the influence of a sensual age.

The earliest known drama grew directly out of the religion of the Greeks. Pure Greek drama always maintained a close relationship with the national religion, a connected worship of four Greek gods,- Dionysus, Bacchus, Apollo and Demeter. The first evidence of the dramatic element in the Greek religious festivals or ritual was in the dancers who were employed in the worship of the gods. There is the interesting woship also of Dionysus in which a deified representative of his original worshippers, performed, while wrapped in a goat skin which had been sacrificed to him.

In Rome there are two forms of drama,-- the popular and regular,-- the popular being merely a spontaneous expression by the emotional people of the Latin race, through bare-footed dancing and through gesture, amid scenic representation. It is claimed that this was a native form of drama which originated separately from Greek drama, but neverthe_less was connected with religion.[1] The occasions

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1. Encyclopedia Britannica. Drama. Roman Drama.

were religious festivities of various sorts, particularly weddings. The regular drama was distinctly on the Greek model, having been introduced by Livius Andronicus,(278 B.C.)[1], a native of the Greek city of Tarentum, where the Dionysiac festivals were very popular. In Rome, however, new themes were introduced, and the native jocular, festive spirit of the popular drama had its effect. When the regular drama first began, the mimi, performers of the popular drama, played in farcial after-pieces which consisted mainly of dancing and gesture. Then it became the practice (in the first century, A. D.) to simply recite tragedy to a small interested audience, while immense gatherings attended the performance of the pantomimes, which had become a vulgar expression of a markedly sensual age. While the regular drama lingered on and enjoyed imperial spectators during the literary revival under Hadrian (117-138)[2] the crowds surged toward the other type,-- the vulgar and spectacular at the amphitheaters. Under Constantine the Great (306-337)[3] this taste reached its climax and the downfall of the regular drama,-- the classical,-- which had been introduced from Greece, was inevitable. A new adversary had also arisen in the Christian Church, which, looking upon the vulgar scenes of the amphitheater, cast its condemnation upon all manifestations of the dramatic art. As early as 200 this agitation had begun, and when the Church was acknowledged as the religion of Rome, the doom of the theater was sealed. "In Rome, the last mention of the spectacula

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1,2 and 3. Encyclopedia Britannica. Drama. Roman drama.

as still in existence seems to date.....in the earlier half of the sixth century. In the capital and provinces of the Eastern Empire.....its end is authoritively assigned to the.....seventh century."[1]

It can hardly be said that the church was not justified in the stand she took regarding the theater, and it is reasonable to think that the regular drama(that which originated in the Greek religion) would have died anyway because of its unpopularity in a world in which "a lust for sheer obscenity and bloodshed made dramatic writing impossible. Until the theatres in which men were made to die and women to prostrate themselves, not in show but in reality, had long been closed and forgotten, the stage was something too vile and horrible for any attempt to Christianize it; nor could the innate dramatic instincts of mankind again find free play amid the unhealthy surroundings of a dying civilization."[2]

So it was not the Church's condemnation which caused regular drama to die,-- but it was the moral condition of the world. While the Church's orders sealed the tomb of regular drama, its real criticism was against the popular obscene type.

The Cry of Human Nature for the Dramatic Element Kept it Alive.

From the fact that the flame of dramatic instinct continued to burn during those centuries when there was no

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1. Encyclopedia Britannica. Drama. Roman drama.
2. Pollard, Alfred W., English Miracle Plays, Moralities and Interludes. Introduction, p. 1.

chance for expression, we may well consider it as an impulse well worth utilizing. In a later section, we shall see how the mimes kept alive something of the popularity of the art of drama by appearing at festivals from time to time;- how the clergy itself resorted to dramatic writings; and how the Christian Liturgy was the basis of their work, the Church thus becoming the foster mother of a new age of drama. Since little was known of the drama (in the Dark Ages) at the time that it was being written, and since the mimes were masked strollers, who fled into oblivion at the conclusion of their performances, their activities will be discussed more fully as we see the effect upon later periods.

EARLY MIDDLE AGES

Revival of the Dramatic after the Period of Condemnation.

The Mimes.

It seemed impossible to keep down the theatrical profession, but it has been shown how it gradually lost all footing in civic life. The actors, or mimes, however, became a wandering fraternity who would appear at festivals when their services were required and vanish then into obscurity. It has been said that the clergy resorted in their writings to dramatic production. "These efforts of the cloister came in time to blend themselves with more popular forms of the early Medieval drama. The natural agents in the transition of these popular forms were those mimes.... whom the Roman drama had left surviving it, unextinguished

and unextinguishable."[1] The mimes seem to have indulged in other than religious performances, for we find that their profession developed and survived only under the protection of powerful nobles long after the time when religious plays had become a regular and accepted.matter.

In the meantime the mimes were were used for performance at festivals to which from the days of Gregory the Great the Western Church had attracted many popular customs significant of rejoicing but in truth relics of heathen ritual. Some of these were the Mithraic feast of December 25th, the Egg of Eostre-tide, the multitude of Celtic or Teutonic agricultural ceremonies, and the sword dance.[1] These rites, originally symbolical of propitiation or of weather-magic were of a semi-dramatic nature, such as dipping the neck of corn in water, sprinkling holy drops upon persons or animals, processions of beasts or men in beast-masks, dressing trees with flowers, and the like, but above all, the ceremonial dances. These characters were familiar as pace-eggers, mummers, morris-dancers, who continually enlarged the scope of their performances, particularly the comic element.[1]

While the mimes thus performed not only at religious festivals, but elsewhere, there began to grow out of the liturgy itself a modern form of religious drama.

Liturgy the Main Source of Modern Religious Drama.

There were five groups of Christian Festivals, but the periods of Christmas and Easter loaned themselves the best of all to dramatic production. At first there was merely

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1. Encyclopedia Britannica. Drama Roman.

a combining in a fashion which produced dramatic completeness, the epical (reading of portions of scripture by the priest) and lyrical (responses chanted by the choir) possibilities of the liturgy with processions and narrative. The Holy Week Festivities carried on into much later centuries are good examples of this type of service. The mass on Palm Sunday is "preceded by a procession in which each one carries a branch, previously blessed, in remembrance of the triumphal entry of Jesus, six days before his death, into Jerusalem. This ceremony, like many others of the same kind, was at first peculiar to Jerusalem.....It was introduced into the West at a relatively late date, that is, about the eighth or ninth century."[1]

The Easter Vigil was a custom celebrated in countries outside of Rome. In Northern Italy, Gaul and Spain the blessing of the paschal candle was an ancient custom.[2] The ceremony was so popular that the Popes although they did not adopt it in their own churches were obliged to permit its use. "It is needless to say that this custom has the closest relation to that in which a spark, as it were, of the ancient fire was preserved, or that in which there was a solemn production of the new. At Rome, where the ceremony of blessing the paschal candle was not in use, the great lamps prepared on Maundy Thursday were used on the Friday and Saturday to light the two candles which in these latter days were borne in procession before the Pope, in place of the seven candles which ordinarily preceded him. .....The formulary of the blessing, wherever it was in

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1. Duchesne, Mgr.L. op.cit. p. 247
2. Ibid. p. 248

use, was said, not by a bishop, or priest, but by the archdeacon, who for the purpose ascended the ambo, close to which the candle to be blessed was placed. He began, in a sort of invitatory, to announce the beginning of the great festival, then adopting the tone and style of the most solemn prayer-- the Eucharistic-- he called for the Divine blessing on the luminous which was about to shed its radiance of the mysteries of the Christian Passover, as in like manner of old the pillar of fire had gone before the children of Israel to guide them in their wanderings in the desert. He dwelt poetically upon the elements composing it, the papyrus, which furnished the wick, and the virgin oil and the beeswax, which formed the material. Here occurred a curious eulogy of the bee.....chaste and fecund like the Virgin mother, and which in the manner of its generation furnished a type of the eternal origin of the Divine Word."[1]

At an early period, probably not later than the fifth century,[2] living pictures illustrating the gospel narratives attracted large crowds to the services, and from this beginning, action was gradually introduced. Since in the very early times the Bible was only open to the clergy, there had to be some way of letting the people know certain parts of its content. An example of the method they used is shown by the following description:- "The image of the saint was removed from its shrine, and a priest, dressed to represent the image, took its place. The service of the day commences, and at a suitable moment a pause is made for the representa-

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1.and 2 Ibid. p. 249

tion of the miracle; then another priest, dressed as a rich heathen, comes in at the church door and advances to the shrine, where he deposits his treasure, and calls on the saint to guard it for him while he goes away on a journey. As soon as the heathen has gone robbers enter the church, then stealthily creep up to the shrine, and silently carry off the treasure. Soon the heathen returns; on finding his property has been stolen he flies into a rage, and upbraids and beats the image of the saint which had failed to protect his treasure. But upon this the image moves, descends from its niche, goes out and reasons with the robbers, and forces them to make restitution. Terrified by the miracle the thieves return trembling to the church, and bring back all they had taken. The saint's image returns to its niche. The heathen is transported with joy; he sings and adores the image. At this point another priest, personating the saint himself, appears on the scene, and bids the heathen worship God alone-- the heathen thereupon proclaims his conversion to the true faith, and the church service is again proceeded with."[1]

One of the very earliest dramas connected with the liturgy consisted of the ceremony in which the crucifix was solemnly buried on Good Friday and again disinterred on Easter Sunday amid pompous ritual. By degrees the form was elaborated and in a later period it is found in mystery plays in the English Churches and elsewhere.

Since the service of the Church is Roman, the service from which the English mystery plays sprang is Roman. England is not thought to be the only place where religious drama

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1. Clarke, Sidney M. The Miracle Play in England. p. 5

arose from the liturgy. On the contrary it is believed that much of the earliest liturgical drama came as a result of the Norman Conquest. "In Germany at least, the priest was wont, in reading the gospel story, to slowly unfold a roll which, on the side toward the congregation, was pictured over with the figures and scenes froming the subjects of the text."[1] "The primitive Passion drama was nothing more than the solemn lowering of the crucifix on Good Friday, the laying it away beneath the altar, and the raising it again, with anthems of rejoicing, on the Resurrection festival."[2]

As the drama became more elaborate the cavity beneath the altar was not sufficient and stone sepulchres came to be used. An interesting record of the enlarged service remains in Durham: "Within the church of Durham, upon Good Friday, there was a marvellous solemn service, in which service time, after the Passion was sung, two of the ancient monks took a goodly large crucifix all of gold and of the picture of our Saviour Christ, nailed upon the Cross....The service being ended, the said two monks carried the Cross to the Sepulchre with great reverence (which Sepulchre was set up that morning on the north side of the Quire, nigh unto the High Altar before the service time), and there did lay it within the said Sepulchre with great devotion."[3]

A scriptural tragedy founded upon Exodus was written by a Jew in the second century. In the fourth century Apollinarius the Elder, a priest of Laodicea rewrote parts of the Old Testament into dramatic form, while Bishop Apollinarius

1. Bates, Katherine Lee. The English Religious Drama. p. 7
2. Ibid. p. 8,9.
3. Pollard, Alfred W., op.cit. p. XV.

his son, recast the New Testament and Platonic dialogue.[1]

Another description of the Durham Rites as they were carried out in the sixteenth century is very interesting. "There was in the Abbey Church of Durham, very solemn service upon Easter Day, betwixt three or four of the clock in the morning in honour of the Resurrection, where two of the eldest monks of the quire came to the Sepulchre, set up on Good Fryday after the Passion, all covered with red velvet and embroider'd with gold, and did then cense it, either of the monks with a pair of censers, sitting on their knees before the sepulchre. Then they both rising came to the sepulchre, out of which with great reverence they took a marvellous beautiful image of our Saviour, representing the Resurrection, with a Cross in His hand; in the breast whereof was enclosed, in the most bright chrystal, the Sacrament of the Altar, through which chrystal the Blessed Host was conspicuous to the beholders. Then after the elevation of the said picture carried by the said two monks, upon a fair velvet cushion all embroider'd, singing the anthems of Christus Resurgens, they brought it to the high altar, setting it on the midst thereof, and the two monks kneeling before the altar, and censing it all the time that the rest of the whole quire were singing the foresaid antheme of Christus Resurgens; which antheme being ended, the two monks took up the cushion and picture from the altar, supporting it betwixt them, and proceeding in procession from the high altar to the south quire door, where there were four ancient

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1. Bates, Katherine Lee, op.cit. p. 4

gentlemen belonging to the Prior, appointed to attend their coming, holding a most rich canopy of purple velvet, tassell'd round about with red silk and a goodly gold fringe; and at every corner of the canopy did stand one of these ancient gentlemen to bear it over the said images, with the Holy Sacrament carried by the monks round about the church, the whole quire waiting upon it with goodly torches, and great store of other lights; all singing and praising God, till they came again to the high altar."[1]

LATER MIDDLE AGES

Religious Drama in England

Literary Monastic Drama.

During the early part of the Dark Ages the writings of the clergy had been acted mainly within the walls of the monasteries, or as has been shown, by the mimes at the festivals. We usually associate thought of the miracle plays with England, and so although similar plays, called mysteries were also produced elsewhere, they will be considered first as found in their English background.

The tropes, called in the eleventh and twelfth centuries "The Winchester Tropes", were about the first changes made in the liturgical forms. One or more verses of texts were inserted in the texts for the day and recited by the two halves of the choir. This naturally led to dialogue, chanting, and fragments of action such as pulling down the

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1. Feasey, Henry John. Ancient English Holy Week Ceremonial. p. 170

veil before the altar. Roman missals to the present day still retain modifications of such tropes originally sung "with appropriate action by two choirmen representing SS. Peter and John and by three others personating the three Marys, now rendered musically, without action, by the basses and trebles."[1]

When the liturgies first developed into plays they were spoken in Latin since the enactments were by the priests who followed the language of the Church. Later French or Anglo-Norman became the medium of expression, and lastly about the thirteenth century English was used. It was then that the popularity of religious drama forced it to leave the sacred precincts of the Church and go onto the porches and from there for a similar reason into the Church yards, and finally to the open spaces and streets.

The Passion of Christ, around which we have seen that the entire liturgy is built, was the first them of the very first religious plays. In fact, one of the first which was completed in form, goes by that name, "The Passion of Christ." It was for many centuries attributed to St. Gregory Nazianzene in the fourth century, but a recent writer claims its origin to be at least six centuries later.[2] This was a curious play, being acted behind the scenes, and the actions announced by messengers, usually the Virgin Mary.

The famous comedies of Hrosvitha, the Benedictine nun of Gandersheim, in Eastphalian Saxony, are interesting for study. These plays were not based upon the liturgy of the

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1. Ibid. p. 11
2. Ibid. p. 5

Church, but seem to be an original idea of the nun's to make use of the form of Terence, whom she imitated, to teach religious truths. It is thought that she did not succeed in doing this, and according to some her plays are not even funny although called comedies.[1] These plays are not Passion plays, nor saint plays, but are mentioned merely as one type of play produced in the Middle Ages through the efforts of the cloister.

Another type is the Play of St. Catherine acted at Dunstable about the year 1110 in copes by the scholars of the "Norman Geoffrey, afterwards abbot of St. Albans. Nothing is known concerning it except the fact of the performance, which was certainly not regarded as a novelty."[2] This was the earliest play performed in England of which there is any record by name.[3] Its author was a member of the University of Paris, but later resided in England.

Other Saint plays presented very early in the twelfth century told the story of Daniel, of Lazarus and of a miracle of St. Nicholas. These were Latin plays composed by Hilarius, an Englishman of French education.

The Latin and French passion and saint plays were among the first religious dramas to be enacted in England or elsewhere. In order to present clearly the full story of the Passion, plays reaching back to Adam and the Fall of Lucifer were soon written and also others reaching forward to Revelation and the Judgment. Scores of plays were written.

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1. Pollard, Alfred W. op.cit. p. 11
2. Ibid. p. XVI
3. Ibid. p. XVI

So, in the later Middle Ages, we have the religious plays moving out into the courtyards and the streets, away from the church, and finally onto wagons drawn from place to place. At the same time we have the enlarging variety of subjects and the clergy giving away to actors who were better trained. This brought in the age of the Miracles.

Miracle Plays

By this time these plays had come to be known as the Miracle Plays, and the actors at first were inferior personages connected with the Church, especially parish clerks. In the thirteenth century they obtained a charter as an harmonic guild, and became well known and highly reputed company playing often before the court. A little later, in many leading towns in England, as York, Chester and Coventry the trading guilds had also started producing the Miracles. So that a large number of cycles developed, named after the towns in which they originated.

The Miracles had grown to include practically every Biblical story. The various guilds in the town were to be responsible for acting out particular stories. An excerpt from a translated order of the York Plays in the year 1415 is as follows:[1]

Performed By.	Subject and Characters.
1. Tanners	God the Father Almighty creating and forming the heavens, angels, and archangels, Lucifer and the angels that fell with him to hell.
2. Plasterers	God the Father in his own substance creating the earth and all which is therein, by the space of five days.

1. Clarke, Sydney M., op. cit. p. 79.

The lay association thus began soon "to act plays in honour of their patron saints in or near their own halls. Lastly, as scenes or characters of a more or less trivial description were admitted even into the plays acted or supervised by the clergy, as some of these characters came to be depended on by the audiences for conventional extravagance or fun, every new Herod seeking to out-Herod his predecessor, and the devils and their chief assorting themselves as indispensable favorites, the comic element in religious drama increased; and that drama itself, even where it remained associated with the church become more and more profane. The endeavor to sanctify the popular tastes to religious uses, which connected itself with the institution of the great festival of Corpus Christi when the symbol of the mystery of the Incarnation was borne in solemn procession led to the closer union of the dramatic exhibitions with this and other religious feasts."[1]

Of the English Miracle Plays enacted in Medieval times, the London, Worcester and Beverly plays are entirely lost, but 161 others are extant.[2]

In thinking of English religious drama we at first are reminded of three sorts, the Miracles, the Mysteries and the Moralities. However, it is contended by many authors that the term "mystery" as applied to drama, came from the French so-called mystery plays which dealt only with Scriptural subjects, and especially with the central mystery of the Redemption of the world, as accomplished by the Nativity, the

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1. Encyclopedia Britannica. Drama.
2. Bates, Katherine Lee. op. cit. p. 251.

Passion and the Resurrection. Just how the term miracle came to be used they do not indicate, but say that it was used with reference to the legends of the saints. This term, in actual fact, has been popularly used to apply to both the mystery plays (Passion plays) and the legends of the saints, and the term "mystery" does not seem to be used at all in England until comparatively recent days. Since there is so much confusion regarding the distinction between the two kinds of plays, I have classed all of the Passion and Saint Plays under the one name "Miracle." The Miracle Play, then, is the outstanding development of religious drama of the later Medieval period.

The Morality Play.

The Morality Play, almost contemporary with the Miracle, teaches the same truths, but by allegory rather than through the use of scripture. The characters are personified by virtues or vices. These plays had the closest connection with the miracles. There are two kinds of moralities, those which develop the intellect and those which are notably written for their spiritual value. It is the latter which are akin to the miracles. Most of the moralities are hard to read, because of their monotony and tediousness. Some are in a way amusing. For instance in the Castell of Perserverance a character representing a baby only a day old crawls out from beneath the sofa, and is immediately accosted by two angels,-- one good and the other bad. Each tries to entice the child, and when the bad one offers gold the be-

wildered child accepts and turns from the good angel who is left wringing his hands. So the play goes on until at the close Mercy pleads with Divine Passion and Pity and Pardon close the drams. The Morality which claimed the greatest popularity was Everyman. "Death, God's 'mighty messenger' summons Everyman to the long pilgrimage. Bribes, tears, entreaties are all of no avail. The one grace the grim messenger will grant is permission for Everyman to take with him on the mysterious journey such of his friends as may consent to bear him company. Everyman applies to Fellowship, who is ready to follow on to feast and frolic, but flees away at the mention of Death.....Good Deeds is able to rise and accompany Everyman as he paces fearfully toward the churchyard. Beauty, Strength, Discretion, and Five Wits attend him for a space, but shudder at the sight of the grave and fall away. Good Deeds alone, though partaking of their dread, stands firm. 'Shorte our ende and myny she our payne, ' she entreats, and they go down into the grave together, an angel overhead singing welcome to the passing soul."[1]

But not only in England did the liturgy of the Church develop into the field of true drama. In fact, the play just described, Everyman, is thought now to have been taken from a Dutch play, Elkerlyck, probably by Petrus Dorlandus. A Latin version also is extant.[2]

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1. Bates, Katherine Lee, op.cit. p. 217

2. Ibid. p. 217.

Religious Drama in Other Countries

In France there are many religious plays, and in fact the English name "mystery" comes from the French mystère, derived from ministère, because the clergy were the first actors.[1] The earliest play in the French tongue was Adam in the twelfth century. In France, however, drama never fell entirely into the hands of the clergy.

Of the collective mystery in Italy, there is only one example, a Passione di Gèsu Cristo performed at Revello in Saluzzo in the fifteenth century. The Italian religious plays differ from those of northern Europe chiefly in having a less degree of coarseness in their comic characters. They seem largely to have sprung out of the professional element in the festivals of the Church. We hear also of Passion plays being performed in Rome in the Coliseum.

In Spain there is hardly a monument of medieal religious drama which has been preserved, but there is manuscript evidence of the eleventh century attesting the early addition of dramatic elements to the Easter office.

In Germany the Christmas play was dramatized as was also the Easter story. In the fourteenth century also several other plays were performed in honor of St. Catherine, St. Dorothea and others. All of these seem to belong to a period when drama was under ecclesiastical control.[2]

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1. Clarke, Sydney M. op. cit. p. 4.
2. Encyclopedia Britannica. Drama.

THE MODERN PERIOD

By the end of the Middle Ages, over 1500 years had gone by since the first attempts were made to trample out the instinct of drama. For some six hundred years or more this had been done with only a small amount of success. The very body which tried to wipe out the profession of acting, fostered under its own wing those whose writings later contributed to the building up of that very art. The wandering mimes who had helped to keep the instinct alive during those dark ages would in themselves signify little as to its strength. But the fact that there were always ready audiences and crowds to observe their performances, indicates a liking for the dramatic element that is hard to wipe out.

An interesting figure of the modern historical period was Alessandro Gavazzi, who came into prominence during the revolutionary year of 1848. A study of his orations and something of his life reveals the condition into which the Roman Church had lapsed at that time. It is mentioned here because it also indicates the sad decadence to which a pure and natural instinct such as drama may fall. It may be said, too, that when the dramatic element in the Church's liturgy can be kept simple and significant it has its greatest spiritual effect. The converse is also true, for where the emotions of the Church's leaders are kept high and pure this same spirit will be reflected in the dramatic symbolism of their liturgical ceremonials. In his orations in England, Gavazzi, as an exile from his own land, Italy, assailed the treachery, fraud and accumu-

lated impostures of the Roman court. As a part of the first oration delivered in the concert room of the Princess Theater, Oxford Street, he says in part:

".....The old butchers of the French St. Bartholomew have got the upper hand once more; and the massacre of Rome's best citizens may now be added to the canonized and papally glorified extermination of the Huguenots. Do I seek to convert Englishmen to the Papal religion, such as it now stinks in the nostrils of mankind? Heaven keep me from any wish of the sort: Men of England, keep your Christianity-- hug it to your bosoms-- fling it not away for the embrace of the degraded harlot, that flaunts her faded finery in the twilight of human understanding..... ... Better far your Anglican creed, and its simply Liturgy, and its unsophisticated morality, and its plain, downright enmity to soul-destroying delusions, vain unctions of oil to lubricate an evil-doer's passage to eternity, dark confessionals and empty forms of absolutism, mere provocations to renewed criminality;- better cling to your homely creed, than adopt in its present deformity the jumble of incoherences throned on the Seven Hills....." [1] During this speech, having rejected with those of his order, the gorgeous but meaningless robes of the Roman clergy, this Barnabite monk was attired in his black serge habit, and wore on his breast the rude cross of his order. In a subsequent lecture he said:

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1. Fortesque, Adrian. The Mass. p. 8

"'Where friars abound true religion is hopeless', is the remark of every intelligent clergyman in Italy. Rivalry has given impulse to the building of gorgeous structures where each order vied with its antagonist in rich mosaic, glittering relievo, and frescoed walls. But who paid? The patrimony of orphans, swindled from its lawful heirs by the conveyances of the confessional or of the dying pillow. The splendid Carthusian cloister of Pavia, resplendent with marble and pietra dura, is the price of blood and the atonement of assassination."[1] Gavazzi was a foremost representative of the liberal and enlightened views hitherto compressed and discountenanced among the Italian clergy, but now being revealed by the upholders of the new papal policy. The excerpts from his lectures give some idea of the formality to which the originally warm and meaningful symbolism had fallen.

A close study of the religious plays that grew out of the Church's liturgy would reveal a crudeness, hard for us to associate with religious idealism, but we must remember that the drama of any particular day,-- even the religious drama,-- will necessarily be a reflection of the age. In spite of the fact that the modern age rejected the Miracles and Moralities which had held sway for so many hundred years, we cannot say that they did no good. They represented in a crude, physical way the Biblical happenings; especially those of the New Testament, of which we are accustomed to think only in terms of their spiritual significance. But the crude, rough people of that day needed the physical re-

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1. Ibid. p. 15.

presentation. By witnessing the spectacle of Christ's Passion or Ascension these events became real to them, even though it was necessary for the angelic host to draw up the representative figure of Christ by ropes plainly seen. Doubtless, to us such realistic performances as the miracle plays came to be, would be the crudest blasphemy.

Just so it had becomefor the finer spirits at the beginning of the modern age. Even the Interludes, those transitional plays, between the Miracles and the regular drama were rejected. They lingered on after the sway of learning and new drama under Elizabeth had begun, but they could not live long. The world had had enough of the realistic, and found in the new drama a new freshness which had none of the rough edges of the Miracles and Moralities.

The new element which the Interludes brought to religious drama and also the attitude of the modern era toward the Miracles is well expressed by Mantzius: ".....The Moralities are the first to catch hold of the prominent features of the human character and expose each of them to contemplation, thus laying the foundation of future great pictures of character,"[1] and by Hase: "The new secular culture only smiled at the artless naïveta of the miracle play with its simple effort to portray supernatural events. As men esteemed the divine story too solemn to be made the plaything of dramatic fancy, secular interests were now represented in the drama, with the happy or tragic solution of

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1. Russell, Mary M. How to Produce Plays and Pageants. p.28

their conflicting claims. Thenceforward, the stage, which has for its office to typify the world, has existed far apart from the church."[1]

It is true that from the time of the Renaissance, all through the modern era, religious plays gradually sever their connection with the liturgy. It is unfortunate that the Church ever lost her hold on the religious drama which began under her supervision in the early Medieval period. Within the last thirty-five years or less there has been a new revival in the writing and acting of religious drama and especially within the last decade.

PRESENT DAY USAGES

True Drama

Once more the dramatic instinct is not abashed in revealing itself through great religious themes. During the last four centuries great changes have taken place. The impact of one character against another, or the command of one character over another, has taken its place alongside of the spectacular, and combined with it to convey emotion. In religious drama as well, the themes of the newer plays are designed to coincide in a rational way with the experiences of human nature. The attempt is no longer made to depict the supernatural in the crude method of the Middle Ages. If there is a supernatural happening, it is made evident through the influence it has upon a human character, or if need be it is portrayed through the simplest

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1. Ibid. p. 29.

of symbolic figures.

As to Biblical plays, even there the imagination, combined with the result of historical research, is allowed to build up themes and fill in gaps so that they may appeal to the reason as well as the eye.

There has been also a change in emphasis. Where the miracle play seemed to have as its intention the presentation of the horrible, and a sort of threatening spirit, the new plays are designed to show God's love and also the happy spiritual result which comes after a worthy, sincere struggle with life, and with its problems.

An exquisite drama and one of the best of those recently published is, "A Christmas Miracle" by Anna Hampstead Branch. A child enters a shoemaker's shop and asks the shoemaker, who is working very diligently, to make him some shoes. The shoemaker gives first one excuse and then another to explain why he cannot make the child some shoes. The child answers each excuse with the words, "My feet are bleeding, shoemaker. Little ones will do." The answer comes in very rhythmically, thus bringing with it particular force and beauty. Finally the shoemaker yields and goes to his bench to make a pair of shoes for the child. While he is doing so the child leaves and returns, unseen by the shoemaker, with several pairs of shoes which he was neglecting to make in order to make the pair for the child. He finally gives the child the shoes, and as the child leaves other children outside sing of the Christchild, and the shoemaker

realizes that he has been harbouring Christ under his roof.

Another outstanding example of present-day religious drama is found in "The Resurrection" an Easter miracle play. As presented, it was a fragmentary miracle play belonging to one of the old Medieval cycles, which had been restored and modernized into present-day or at least understandable English by its producer. We are told that it was more than a play. "The action was a living reality from the time the curtain was drawn aside to reveal Pilate brooding alone in the twilight, in his garden, over the condemnation of one in whom he had 'found no fault'.....When, finally, the Angel of the Lord appears before the little company, (of desciples) bathed in a flood of radiance, the triumphant chorus of Handel's 'I know that my Redeemer liveth' swells forth."[1]

"Darkness and Dawn", presented at St. John's Cathedral in Denver, Colorado, and "Eagerheart" a Christmas mystery presented at St. George's, the oldest Episcopal Church of New York are other examples of the use of drama in the church services of today.

More and more ministers of all faiths are making use of man's dramatic nature to teach religious truths. It is coming to be realized that often times a dramatic presentation will drive home its message where a sermon would fail completely.

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1. Candler, Martha. "Drama in Religious Service"

Dramatic Ritualistic
Services.

There is, in addition to religious plays, a recent type of ritualistic service, not in any way connected with the Eucharist, which combines a beautiful aesthetic effect, such as that caused by the dim light of candles, with the purely dramatic element, to produce a spiritual atmosphere suitable for the worship of God.

Ridgely Torrence has prepared several very beautiful services in poetical form. A few lines from the ritual for birth and naming will serve as an example:

".....
Consider well your ways and lives,
You gardners of the precious seed.
As brief attenders of the need,
Draw honey from the upper hives.
Make sweet the weather for the flowers;
Withdraw the snares, but make it free.
You shall be watchers for an hour,
But it shall never cease to be."

The same tranquil note is to be found in the lines read just before the burial of the dead:

"To the glowing feast of birth,
All the distant guests return,
Nothing pauses in the earth.
But onward, where no temporal eye may range,
The lover and the love shall burn--
Upward, through the widening halls of change.
Though the paths be steep and strange,
On the steadfast dreams ascending,
Ever shall the wreathed door be found
With the spirit's bridal garland crowned,
And the silver babbling welcome sound
To the banquet never ending....." 1

At Old Second Church (Unitarian), which was the church of Cotten Mather, Waldo Emerson and many other illustrious men, as well as a church rich in historical associations,

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1. Torrence, Ridgely. Hesperides.

use has been made of a Christmans ritual, "Spirit of Christianity". The ritual is in the form of a Nativity pageant, and has been called by those who have seen it, a synthetic spectacle.

Perhaps some of the most interesting experiments along this line have been made by Dr. William Norman Guthrie of St. Mark's-in-the-Bouwerie at Manhattan. Dr. Guthrie evidently feels that it is worthwhile to have made a study of worship and liturgy of various churches and prayer books, for out of his study he has evolved some services beautiful and effective, in their own way, upon the spiritual needs of the people. In arranging his services, Dr. Guthrie has made use of art of all sorts in order to give to his congregation something which will awaken in them a new inspiation and faith in God. Not without opposition great changes were made in the church edifice itself. "We cleared our edifice of offense, and restored to it useful and symbolic objects of colonial and atmospheric charm. We procured for it complete control of light and darkness and color. We equipped it with an organ for modern work, preserving all the precious old stops. As for the churchyards for the dead-- we endeavored to make them Paradises for the living. With the help of the Queen of Holland, of Solon Borglum, and of Attilio Piccirilli, we got sculpture a-plenty. We obtained fountain and bird bath, pigeons and peocock. We got landscaping and planting placed now in the charge of one who swears he can fight carbon-monoxide gas successfully in spite of belching auto-trucks! We put the symbol of our

Eden innocence into a so-called fresco really painted with cement by Olson, in the pediment.....We had redeemed a historic spot that must be preserved henceforth for all time or so, at least, we fondly hope. We had the mise-en-scène and the atmosphere at last."[1] As a foundation for the services to be carried on in this newly beautified edifice, Dr. Guthrie turned first to the Anglican Prayer Book, and the Scriptures. "Let us select materials out of them and shape them to new forms for offices that can realize each time some special grace, some function of the Holy Spirit in and through Christ Jesus. His paradoxes, His parables, significant episodes of His Gospel offer rich opportunities. Realize them as evocative, provocative, convocative!- Let us bathe in atmosphere! be drunk with one mood at a time, and so in the course of the season subject ourselves to all-- until we really can be supposed Catholic in the only sense of inclusive, whole minded and whole hearted.

"How exceedingly simple! One just begins with centos focused to one holy interest. One picks little anthologies, fragrant bouquets of spell and charm. Every Sunday is made a special Sunday-- getting its constructive hint in the morning from the Church Calendar; in the afternoon from the birthday of geniuses; at night from the "elements" as sacramental means for recuperation and rest. We must create a cycle of offices corresponding to those occasions-- Christmas and Easter being, of course, the two focal magnetic centers

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1. Guthrie, William Norman. Offices of Mystical Religion. pp. xxii-xxiv.

of our seasonal ellipse. And what more inevitable, obviously, than the introduction of first the dance, that is, the selfless oblation of the whole body to God-- that Mother of all the arts? Then we call for her children: the first daughter, Music-- instrumental, vocal: next the Mime and the evocative Ode or Dithyramb; combining in the Mystery, that is the Dromenon,-- a symbolic ritual that compels the potent presence of the god by an enaction of his myth. To perennialize them sculpture and decoration should be obtained, if possible, but all prayers and hymns mounting to ecstasy, surmounting mountains of offense and dull-witted mass resistance!"[1] Thus, in the services which have been evolved for St. Mark's-in-the-Bouwerie, everything possible has been combined to give artistic touch and a beautiful realism to worship, and to maintain for it a continual freshness rather than the monotony which so often comes with a pure formalism. All of the old things are used, but in a different way, by the use of dialogue, the dance, the mime, the cantor, choice bits of poetry, song, and carefully selected homilies and scriptures. All sorts of themes are used, care being taken to have them in harmony with the season of the year, thus translating the spiritual things into terms of life itself.

Examples might be given of numerous other ritualistic services, ranging in quality and effectivenss from the very crude to the elaborate plans just described. It may be

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1.Ibid. p.XXIV

said that wherever the forms used adher more closely to the central theme of the Christian Church, that is,- the Passion of Christ,- the effectiveness is more complete. At least it is clear that mankind persists in finding some means of giving dramatic expression to his deepest feelings.

Dramatic Element Persisting in Formal Liturgies.

In the liturgies of the various churches we find that the dramatic and symbolical element has persisted throughout the years, in spite of the condemnation of the Church upon the theater which began its growth at the most central interest of the Christian religion.

The procession is a form older than the Bible itself, for it is based upon three incidents later placed on the pages of the Sacred Book,-- the encircling of Jerico, the bringing of the Ark into Jerusalem, to the accompaniment of Psalms and instrumental music, and the procession of the palms when Christ entered Jerusalem. We are told that anciently there was a procession before high Mass every Sunday. Dr. Dearmer indicates an authoritative, though modified form of this old procession, and suggests its use by all ministers. The verger, in his typical gown comes first, holding the mace or verge, whence he has his name, and makes way for the remainder of the procession. The clerk in tunicle, carrying the cross, is next in the order, followed by two taperers, carrying their candles and walking side by side. The thurifer, subdeacon, deacon, book boy, priest, choir, and remainder of the clergy, dressed

surplice, hood and tippett, or almuce, those of higher rank walking behind those of lower, follow in the order named. The bishop, if present, is at the end of the procession, wearing his cope and mitre, and carrying his staff or having it carried by his chaplain.

"A short hymn may be sung as the procession enters the chancel and the ministers go to the altar. In any case a station should certainly be made before the high altar (for this is the object of the procession), the priest, after a Versicle and Response, saying,'Let us pray' and a collect. The arrangement may be as follows:- When the verger reaches the altar-rail he turns and goes off to one side, the thurifer goes off to the other; the clerk turns to allow the three sacred ministers to pass him and then stands facing east on either side of the three ministers; the choir may stand in the chancel facing east. The book boy opens his book at the place arranged, and brings it to the priest, standing in front of him with his back to the altar, and holding up the book while the priest reads the collect. After which the ministers and servers bow to the altar and go to the sacristy, and the choir go to their places."[1] Dr. Dearmer's suggestion as to processions and other forms used in the Anglican Church is made after a careful study of the symbollic significance. It is his idea that there should be more of an effort to have all churches use these old forms in essentially the same way so that anyone entering a church will be able to understand

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1. Dearmer, Percy <u>The Parson's Handbook</u>. p. 297.

the ceremony.

One only needs to open a Prayer Book of the Anglican Church or the Roman Missal to discover that the old symbollic forms still hold for those who follow them with accuracy the ancient significance. Unfortunately, according to the oppinions of some, various forms are used which really have no meaning attached. Here, we would agree, the dramatic effect is greatly lessened. It is enough to say, however, that mankind likes the dramatic presentation of great religious truths because thus they become more realistic and impressive, as well as giving vent to strong emotion.

SUMMARY

An attempt has been made to show that throughout history from the early days of the Christian Church to the present time there has been an insuppressable instinct of mankind to give dramatic expression to its deepest feelings. This has been done through a study of the liturgies and other services of the church.

In the formal Christian Liturgy, the dramatic element has been traced, indicating ways in which it was used or produced. From the beautiful aesthetic effect and symbolism of architecture and altar arrangement, to the actions of the priests and the words of the chanted psalms, the element has been found. From the moment of genuflection as the worshipper enters the church to the time that he solemnly partakes of the Holy Eucharist,- everything done reflects some

desired emotion. And even from prayers to processions,--all kinds of posture add to the dramatic element of the formal liturgies of the Roman and Eastern Catholic Churches as well as of the Protestant Churches.

Along side of the formal liturgy has developed the true drama, orginating in the Liturgy but soon departing from it to be enacted elsewhere as well as in the Church. The reference here is to the Passion Plays and Saint Plays as enacted in the Miracles and Moralities. We have seen that the Interludes were a form of transitional drama which ushered in a new type of religious play, setting up human type characters against each other rather than using the Bible figures and themes exclusively, in crude realism.

It has been shown that the dramatic instinct, in spite of a long period of outward suppression, has lived on through the centuries, finding always its original impetus in religious themes and formulas. At the present day we find a wide recognition of the value of this instinct in presenting and teaching religious truths, and therefore a substitution of religious plays and dramas and ritualistic services for the regular sermon. And we find also, the effort on the part of the clergy to keep to the purely symbollic in the ceremony of the formal liturgy.

A part of the purpose of this paper has been to reveal mankind's natural bent toward the dramatic expression of his deepest feelings, by showing the extent to which the element of drama has been used in formal liturgy and other services

of the Christian Church. It is seen that there is no lack of evidence on this point. The other purpose was to create an interest in the dramatic method of presenting religious truths, and it is hoped that this aim has been at least partially fulfilled.

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